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MEMORIES OF THE FATHERLAND

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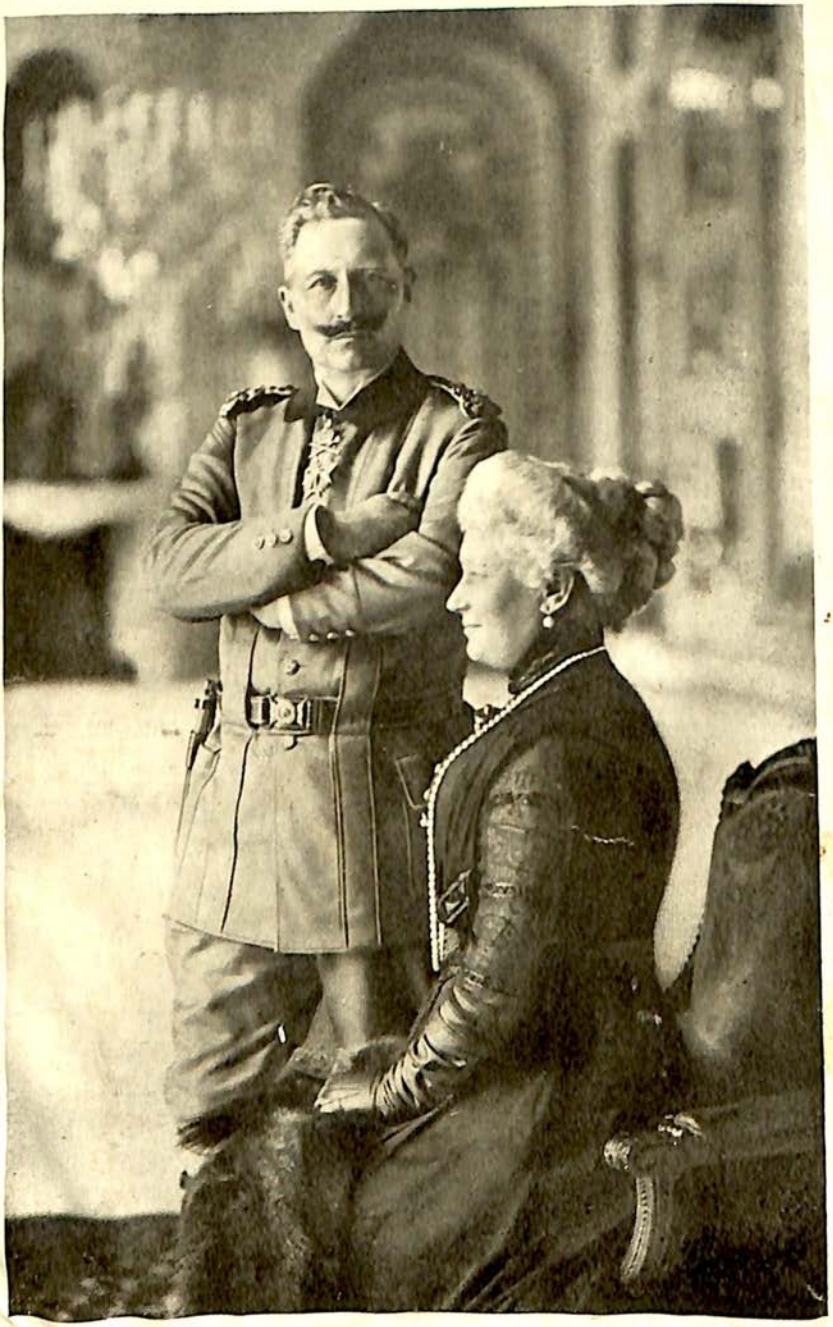

THE GERMAN EMPEROR, WILHELM II, AND THE EMPRESS AUGUSTA VICTORIA

MEMORIES OF THE FATHERLAND

BY

ANNE TOPHAM
AUTHOR OF "MEMORIES OF THE KAISER'S COURT"

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WITH TWELVE ILLUSTRATIONS

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MEMORIES OF THE FATHERLAND.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

OF all the memories of Germany and the Germans that linger in my mind, although those connected with the Prussian Court, where I spent seven interesting and not unhappy years assisting in the education of the Emperor's daughter, naturally emerge with the greatest prominence and frequency from the background of the past, yet there are many other recollections of certain phases of German life, experiences met with away from the somewhat stilted and wearisome atmosphere of the Court, the memory of which returns to me in the light of recent tragic events with a renewed and stimulated interest. The German nation and the policy that guides its destinies have recently been put to the test, while the psychology of its people has been analysed and explained as surely the soul of no race in the records of history has ever before been analysed and explained. The searchlight of a

virulent criticism applied to the dissection of that subtle thing, a national personality, is bound to throw into somewhat lurid and exaggerated relief certain traits of national character, to invest well-known personalities with a new and sinister significance.

The German nation is a nation of tremendous cohesion, hammered and welded into homogeneity by methods which do not commend themselves to our English minds, which have been developed in an atmosphere of purer freedom, of more individualistic tendencies; but it is difficult for the ordinary Englishman —I will not say untravelled Englishman, for those who have travelled in Germany without being able to speak the language and in consequence to mix with the people, are almost as remote from understanding the German spirit as those who have never been there—it is, I say, extremely difficult for the ordinary Englishman, whose experiences have not enabled him to gain an insight into anything but the mere outward and visible expressions of German methods, to realize the difference in point of view between German and English ideals. Beyond chronicling certain experiences this book makes little attempt to interpret the German national consciousness, a very complex and in some respects astonishingly contradictory spirit, rising to wonderful heights of sublimity, merging into the most nauseous sentimentality; often inspired by self-interest, yet anxious to convince itself of the purity of its motives, and always preserving a sense of being a part of a great whole whose culminating

splendour is personified in the person of the Emperor, deified by his people to an extent incredible to English minds.

The picture of Germany as it appeared before the war to those of us who have lived there, has been one on which we have fixed our gaze with a desperate hope that after all it was not a travesty of the real thing, that the German people were, as we had believed, a simple-hearted, kindly, industrious, and highly cultivated people, living up to the same standard of honour as ourselves, and inspired by those ideals which make a nation great; but day by day the outlines of this picture have become blurred by the horrors and agonies of a warfare of such ruthless type as the modern world has never known. To those of us who knew Germany fairly well, who have lived on terms of intimacy with her people, the seeming inconsistency in her conduct, the music and poetry, the sentiment and idealism which seem so incongruously allied with an overbearing brutality and diseased egoism, are nevertheless in the nature of an easily accepted and understood attitude of mind. We can see and explain to ourselves some of the reasons that have made the German people what they are; we know that they are docile and easily led, of somewhat plastic and childlike mind, a mind liking to keep company with other minds, kept carefully pruned and only allowed to shoot forth in governmentally approved directions. We know that they are a people passionately trained from childhood to believe in the divine destiny of the

German race, that their patriotism is as their religion, blind maybe and fanatical, but followed with a faithful sense of the duty and necessity of self-sacrifice, of whole-hearted self-abnegation, a people that take a certain pride in their lack of refinement, which they regard as verging perilously on effeminacy. They have an intense and inherited hatred for French politeness and subtle wit, and prefer a blunt coarseness, a rather broad form of humour, because in it they see the virility and down-right honesty which they imagine to be a purely Teuton characteristic.

Before the horror of the Present entirely obliterates the happier memories of bygone times, out of the wreck and welter of dissolving friendships and shattered illusions, one puts forth a timid hand, striving to save some broken fragment, to preserve from complete obliteration in the turbid flood of events some shadowy recollection of a saner, happier time, when Germany was at peace and all seemed well with the world.

Of the German Emperor's Court and the childhood of his daughter the writer in a former book has already given some glimpses to the outside world. That first chronicle of memories was chiefly a record of a child's life, of a child who, though born in the purple, at a time when her father had for some years been enjoying the Imperial dignity, found her chief happiness, as all children do, in the small brief happenings of existence, in the unimportant everyday things that are essentially alike in palaces and in the humblest homes.

A short time after the marriage and departure of that sunny presence from her father's Court, the dark clouds that had been threatening so long suddenly descended and the storm burst.

"I was born on a Friday and on the thirteenth of the month," laughingly remarked the Emperor's daughter on the eve of her wedding, "but my luck hasn't been so very bad, has it?" and she looked as though she would continue to defy Fate and the omens; but even at that time, when she was so happy, the shadow of war had already been haunting her consciousness and troubling the serenity of her dream of love.

"The poor child did nothing but cry after she was engaged," said the Empress a few days after her daughter's wedding. "She was always imagining that war would break out—extraordinary, wasn't it? Always thinking that Prince Ernst August would have to go away and fight and they would never meet again. She was continually crying when he was away, and grew so thin and miserable—always fretting and unhappy."

The Empress smiled indulgently and pityingly at her daughter's folly, while some of the ladies of the Court commented on the peculiar obsession of the Princess. They also told how one of the Empress's suite, anxious to encourage the disconsolate fiancée, had jokingly assured her that even if war did break out in the Balkans she would have no reason for special uneasiness.

"It will be a campaign of just six weeks or so, and princes are always sent to the front packed in cotton

wool, and are only unpacked when they get home again," said the old gentleman, treating her fears lightly. The Princess laughed but continued to be anxious. She had a surer instinct than those around her. She knew that the ladies and gentlemen of the Court were often curiously ignorant of the political eddies that flowed and ebbed around them. They were so accustomed to wild rumours. They had heard them so often. They were sure that trouble would be avoided by tactful diplomacy. They ignored the possibility of the tactful diplomat not being forthcoming, that some time the reins might be in the hands of a well-meaning blunderer, incapable of dealing with a difficult situation.

Few people who in recent years have visited Germany will be ready to deny that their first impressions of the Empire and its people were very pleasant ones.

The beautiful forests, lakes, and mountains of its southern regions compared favourably with any other scenery in the world, and in the country districts the simple, homely, industrious life of the people made an immediate and irresistible appeal. One felt at once attracted to those strong-looking sturdy brown peasant-women who might be seen everywhere, working from dawn till dusk in the fields throughout the summer months, turning smiling friendly faces to the stranger who happened to pass, always with a ready word of greeting. Even though they wore no shoes or stockings, though their clothes were faded and plain, they radiated an air of neatness, of rude health, of a poverty which

was self-respecting and not unduly self-conscious. One wished that all poverty were as dignified, as cheerful, and as picturesque.

It might be that our encounters with the smaller official class may have caused us to yearn for the considerate urbanity that characterizes policemen and porters in England, and our dealings with an employé of the German customs department, left in an inexplicably violent state of irritation by the delinquencies of the owner of the trunks which had been examined before ours, might have made us wonder why our innocent effects should be offered up as a sacrifice to a very human but unofficial fit of temper, why the callous hand of the purple-faced *Zöllner*, irritated, as one plainly perceived, to that explosive point which seems so easily reached by foreign officials, should devastate our cherished and undutiable belongings in a search for things which he must have known were not there. Why did he accuse our obviously last year's, recently-cleaned blouses of being new, forcing us to reveal in public the small holes and worn places, the existence of which we had shrunk from admitting even to ourselves?

Yet apart from some small vexations which led us to believe that a certain type of German was specially trained—as people train dogs to be savage by goading and ill-treating them—to keep all his most disagreeable qualities uppermost for the benefit of the public, our first impressions of Germany and its people were distinctly pleasant.

The doings of *Das Volk*—the people—were, as elsewhere, of intense and continual interest. Higher in the scale of entertainment than any amount of picture galleries, museums, churches, ruins, or other distractions thrust on the tourist, is the life of the working-class—their diversions, their tastes, their dress, their ideas. The existence of the mass of the people, untouched by foreign customs, is always the most individual, the most characteristically national.

One never grew tired of watching, on warm, sunny Sunday afternoons, the endless procession of men, women, and children—such an astonishing quantity of children—moving in a solid perspiring mass, with, on the part of the older people, that solemn, serious air, as of participants in a ceremonial function, towards the various *Garten-Restaurants*, where, for an infinitesimally small sum, they might indulge in beer and coffee, and would eat the honey-cakes and *Butter-Brödchen* that the frugal *Haus-Frau* had brought with her from home, carried in a green plush bag with "*Guten-Appetit*" worked across it in Gothic letters from corner to corner. Sometimes they would buy picture-post-cards for one *Pfennig*—the tenth part of a penny—and each inscribe some affectionate greeting to the soldier son of the family doing his military service in some distant garrison town.

Close to the restaurant, under the wide-spreading lime-trees planted in the light, sandy soil, at the edge of the forest, that ubiquitous delightful forest which adds so much to the charm of the country, hundreds of

green-painted iron tables and chairs, as well as wooden benches with legs fixed into the ground, were placed. And at every table, flooded with the warm sunshine, in that still, golden mellow summer air of the Continent which we hardly know in our cooler islands, family groups sat enjoying themselves in the decent, quiet, respectable, orderly German way, drinking their coffee, munching *Pfanne-Kuchen*, sniffing the warm, resinous odour of the pine-trees.

Waiters in somewhat crushed-looking shirts and conventional if rather rusty evening suits hurried breathlessly from table to table, taking orders, performing feats of dexterity with trays and plates, bringing toothpicks and cigars, or chess-boards for those superior spirits who, completely detached from the subdued turmoil around them, could immerse themselves in the problems of the game.

When the summer darkness fell, bringing only a relative coolness, for the air still remained warm and enveloping, lights began to twinkle among the trees, beads of tiny lanterns strung on wire threads ran from branch to branch, and, under the far-away stars, to the accompaniment of the gentle rustling of the pine-branches in the dark depths of the forest, the eating and drinking still went merrily on.

Nature and restaurants are invariably associated in the German mind, and a passionate enthusiasm for food is combined with an equally intense admiration of scenery.

As soon as a beauty spot is discovered, it is improved by cutting down trees if necessary, convenient paths are constructed converging to it, dangerous corners fenced off, finger-posts erected telling the travellers of the beautiful view to be seen a little higher up, seats are carefully arranged where he can sit and soak into his soul whatever it is capable of assimilating, and as he turns away, satiated perhaps with the wonders of atmosphere and scenery, unobtrusively, tactfully, but none the less inevitably, nailed perhaps to the stem of a straight, upstanding pine-tree, appears before his absorbed consciousness the wooden tablet bearing the suggestive word "*Erfrischung*" or "*Restauration*" with a rudely painted hand indicating the direction where the said refreshment and restoration may be found.

The *Wald-Restaurant* will be hidden in a nest of verdure and consist chiefly of *Wald* and green-painted chairs and tables, but will be none the less ready to minister every Sunday to the wants of an astonishing number of hungry and thirsty admirers of Nature.

"Prose and Poetry," sighed a German friend to me once as he drew back the chair from the table we had selected for our *Abend-Essen*, and he nodded in the direction of a lady on our right who was devouring *Kalb-Schnitzel mit Bohnen* with the whole-hearted energy and obvious enjoyment characteristic of her nation. Then he turned to the left where, above the purple peak of a hill outlined against a sky suffused with dying scarlet, a star glittered in lonely beauty.

"The Ideal and the Real," he continued as he took his seat, "always they torture us with their incongruity —a continual jarring—why must people eat? It is really a stupid, inæsthetic arrangement. The world would be so much more beautiful if we did not need to be continually replenishing our bodies with greasy meat and vegetables—pieces of dead cattle"—and he looked with disgust at the *Kalb-Schnitzel.*

"But," I objected timidly, "somewhere I have read that Hunger is the great motive power of the world—it is what drives all the mills and steam-engines and builds the bridges and railways. Nobody would work if they never were hungry, there would be no stimulus, no urgent need——"

He began to look bored, so I stopped talking, and he then ordered a large and succulent supper, not at all of a vegetarian nature, enjoying it thoroughly, and never, until he had quite finished, allowing his gaze to wander to the scenery. He then lit a large and rank-smelling cigar and became unduly sentimental, breaking into snatches of song and poetic apostrophes to the moon, whose thin sickle had swung into view from behind the pine-tops.

If there happened to be a *Gesang-Verein* — a choral society—out for a jaunt, it was certain that the depths of the silent woods would dissolve into sudden and frequent harmony, and the velvety darkness be pierced by tuneful voices trolling forth one of those quaint simple German *Volks-Lieder* which were created

to be sung in the open air out under the stars among the perfumes of field and forest. And the stranger in the land, hearing and seeing these things for the first time,—the songs in the twilight, the outdoor life of sunshine and forest,—believed that this was the real Germany, the Germany which appeared to be unconscious of the necessity of a naval policy or *Welt-Politik*, which obviously seemed to prefer its present on the sunny, fruitful soil of the Fatherland to any potential future on the water. The simplicity, the sober mirth, and kindliness appeared to be a fundamental part of the national temperament, and the English traveller felt his prejudices melting, and, as his knowledge of the outer national life increased, his respect increased with it.

Later on he may perhaps have found himself not quite certain if all was as well as it appeared to be: he might have wondered if the benevolent despotism of German rule was good or bad for people; if it was better to have everything arranged without worrying about the wishes or opinions of the people arranged for; if it was good to be well governed without popular consent, or less well governed with it. In Germany politics seem to be so remote from the ordinary life of the people it is hardly worth while to discuss them, they interest only a few. Before an election there are no campaigns of heated and incoherent speeches; no one gets excited about it; no one writes letters to the papers. One is spared, not only the clash and clamour of opposing forces which echo in the correspondence columns of our own

English papers, but also the ventilation of the private opinions and experiences of Mr. Nobody, who with us is encouraged to write, often astonishingly illuminating letters, for the instruction of his fellow-citizens. In Germany the people are divided into two great sections, those who do as they are told and those who tell them, and if it were not for the Social Democrats, who keep things from getting tame and stagnant, and preserve an attitude of discontent which is perhaps more divine in its origin than the monarchical privileges inherited by the rulers of modern Germany, German politics would appear to be almost non-existent. As a nation the people are wonderfully docile, and accept with a kind of resigned patience much that they find personally objectionable. They know that they are a splendidly organized people, that in spite of themselves they have been welded into something massive and coherent, and they certainly have no desire to change their own form of government for anything more nearly approaching the English system. The great middle class have infinite faith in their rulers: they prefer to be spared the necessity of deciding matters of high policy, for which their training and experience have not fitted them; they like to be masters of detail, and to leave the big design to experts; they have been content to know that Germany has been increasing wonderfully in wealth and power and *prestige* during the last thirty years; they believe her invincible; they cannot imagine a form of government superior to the one they possess; they are passionately

inspired by a feeling of personal devotion and service to their Emperor, and are trained to an inspired patriotism whose chief note is self-sacrifice and blind obedience.

I once knew an elderly English gentleman, one of those pleasant people who always try to see the rosy side of things and find extenuating circumstances in even the worst of crimes. He had lost a good deal of money by persistently believing that the prospectuses issued by company-promoters were to be accepted as a fair and unprejudiced statement; the golden optimism radiating from them warmed his heart and fired his imagination. He was a dear unsophisticated person, and lived a life of illusion. Fortunately, his own personal habits were of the simplest, so that he hardly missed the money he lost, and the special Providence that dedicates itself to the service of such as he, often interfered and saved him from his worst indiscretions. He once spent six weeks with his son in wandering about pleasant bypaths of the Fatherland, remote primitive places in the Black Forest, where he noted for the first time the many pleasant aspects of German existence. Since that time until his death a month before the Great War broke out, he steadily refused to believe in German militarism, and assured every one who discussed the subject with him that it did not exist. Nowhere had he seen a German uniform, and all the Germans he met had been obviously absorbed in quite peaceful occupations, tilling the soil, keeping hotels and restaurants, travelling as tourists; they talked amiably with him

in his own tongue, continually quoted Shakespeare, paid him various kind little attentions dear to the heart of an elderly gentleman, and he returned home to England almost convinced that the German Navy had no material existence, but was a fevered dream of certain excitable English politicians.

I have met a good many English men and women of that type in Germany, so determined to divest their minds of preconceived dislikes, so anxious not to be insular, but to give even the hated foreigner his due, that they have run to the opposite extreme, and enjoying, unconsciously to themselves, the mere differences of national custom as though they were something infinitely to the credit of the Germans, they accepted all the pleasures, the undiluted sunshine, the outdoor existence of *Garten-Restaurants*, the not entirely disinterested amiability of hotel-keepers and waiters, as proofs of some innate superiority in German social life.

They considered it a sign of national industry that so many women might be seen working in the fields, ignoring those that worked at unloading bricks and in factories; they confused that personal sense of interest and well-being which most travellers enjoy, with something inherently attractive in the German atmosphere. They believed that they had been totally misled in their estimate of the nation, and when they returned home set themselves to persuade other people that the Germans were a peaceful race of infinite charm who were woefully misjudged in England.

The cultivated German can be very charming, and still more the cultivated German woman, but it is perhaps only when one differs in opinion with any foreigner that a real glimpse of his character is to be discovered. When all the pleasant urbanity takes to itself wings and flies away, leaving an angry, fretful person who with the unselfconsciousness of a child exhibits his own feelings in waves of self-revelation, then comes an opportunity to look into the man's real soul. If he is petty-minded, he will be petty and ignoble in his anger; if he is broad-minded and tolerant, even his rage will show itself as something not unworthy of a finely constructed mental fabric. The German is easily moved to irritability and even wrath. He whips himself consciously into anger, and is prodigal of ridiculous and mirth-provoking gesticulations as evidence of the strength of his emotions. He possesses little self-control, though he talks a great deal about it. "*Man muss sich selbst beherrschen*" shrieks the German schoomaster, and then he clenches his fist and with prodigal arm-wavings raves at his pupil for some small breach of regulations. The Englishman, as a rule, when he feels himself beginning to get angry, grows rather quiet and polite; but the German, on the contrary, from the first moment of conscious outrage disguises his feelings neither to himself nor others. I am not sure that he would not consider it almost hypocritical to do so, and in any case he has never been brought up to believe that it is disgraceful in a grown-up man to exhibit an easily-

WILLIAM II CONGRATULATING COUNT ZEPPELIN ON THE FIRST VISIT OF HIS AIRSHIP (DESTROYED BY FIRE THREE DAYS LATER) TO BERLIN

PRINCE ADALBERT OF PRUSSIA, THIRD SON OF THE GERMAN EMPEROR

fretted and childish anger. It is in moments such as these that the national temperament seems to reveal itself, and we see the fundamental differences that eternally divide the British and the Teutonic mind.

It has been made a reproach to English people that they do not understand German ideals and the German attitude of mind, but still fewer English people appear capable of understanding the British attitude of mind, of appreciating the tremendous gulf that separates the English mentality from that of Continental nations. We do not ourselves grasp what England and English ideas of liberty have done for us and for the world, and it is only when we get away from our own shores, when we live in countries where we find other than English methods and ideas prevailing, that we begin to have an insight into all that England stands for in the world's history, to realize that when Wordsworth called our country "a bulwark of the cause of men" he was not indulging in mere poetic licence, but enunciating a very vital and significant truth.

CHAPTER II

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

MY first visit to Germany took place some twenty years ago, when with a friend I made a three weeks' tour in the Rhine district. That portion of the German nation which then came within my limited sphere of observation consisted chiefly of perspiring waiters talking English of a peculiarly ingenious and unusual quality, and the stout, bland, polite gentlemen in immaculate morning dress who appeared to live, move, and have their being day and night on the top step of the hotel, where they were continually engaged in welcoming the arriving or speeding the departing guests.

"*Glückliche Reise, mein Herr. Glückliche Reise, meine Dame.*" No one was allowed to depart—and scores of hotel guests departed daily—without this benediction from the *Wirt*.

The hotel where we stayed was one of those quaint old-fashioned houses built round a central courtyard, much patronized by the Germans themselves, and therefore more interesting to live in than the palatial "Victoria," "Windsor," and "Britannia" directly on

the river front, which were so crowded with Americans and English that one might almost as well have been in London or New York.

The bedrooms were distinctly German bedrooms, pervaded by a rough cleanliness. The floors were painted the colour of French mustard, and there was no dressing-table in the English sense of the word, as the marble-topped washstand with its large mirror hung above it was expected to do duty for both.

"Have you noticed," said my friend, after we had been travelling a week, "that nobody—I mean none of the women—'*do*' their hair in Germany? And some of the younger girls have such beautiful hair, but they just twist it up anyhow into a hard knob, and if their hair curls naturally it seems to almost distress them—they remind me of colts going to the fair, with their manes plaited up as tightly as possible. Even the tiniest children have little pigtails, instead of nice curls."

"German cleanliness, German economy, German simplicity, German absence of vanity, German *Tüchtigkeit*," I murmured, quoting the Fräulein at whose feet we had both sat to imbibe a knowledge of the German language and literature.

"No, I don't think it's anything of the kind. The real reason is *that*;" and she pointed to the combined dressing-table-washstand. "You see, here they've given us an expensive high-backed green plush sofa in our room, with three funny little square antimacassar-

things pinned on it for us to rest our heads on, and also a nice round table to write on, and a fine big mahogany hanging cupboard for all the clothes we might have brought with us but didn't—and yet they take for granted that a woman can do herself justice with the only looking-glass placed flat against the wall in the darkest corner opposite to the light. I feel *sorry* for German women. They haven't a chance. I'm not surprised that they give up trying. They never can have a proper idea of what they look like. Yet," she reflected, in the monologue characteristic of her conversation, "they can see each other—one would think that would help; but after all"—with an attempt at impartial judgment—"they are not perhaps really worse than the weird specimens of English we keep meeting. I wonder why people travelling are always funnier to look at and more ill-mannered than people not travelling? I never knew what *awful* specimens my native isles could produce until I met them on the Continent. Why, divorced from his background, does the Englishman, and still more the Englishwoman, produce a feeling of irritation in the observer?"

"I don't know," I interposed; "but they certainly don't get as excited and screaming as the German traveller, and brutally bump every person in the corridor with *Hand-Gepäck* while they utter polite phrases."

We had suffered terrible things from other people's *Hand-Gepäck*, which looms so largely in Continental travel, and although before leaving England we had

determined to remorselessly strip ourselves of every atom of "insular prejudice," of which we were largely conscious; though we resolved to approach differences in national custom with the tolerant scientific mind, which has no room for love or hate or personal bias; to study and search after the ultimate purpose of all the activities to be seen at work around us; yet we never afterwards saw reason to modify that first decision of ours that the comfort of the German railway system was absolutely destroyed by the presence of the enormous quantities of hand-luggage under which every frugal-minded traveller staggers.

In Germany there is no such thing as driving up to the station a minute before the train starts and having your hastily-labelled boxes thrust by an alert and lavishly-tipped porter into the van as it begins to move along the platform. Unsophisticated English travellers are long before they realize the necessity of bringing their heavy luggage to the *Bahn-Hof* at least an hour before the departure of the train. I remember an Englishman, travelling for the first time with his wife on the Continent, who was with great difficulty and much urging by others induced to take his small trunk (just too heavy to be considered *Hand-Gepäck*) to the station half an hour before the train started for Holland.

"I can register that in five minutes," he kept protesting. But when he arrived in a cab with his wife and saw the long, long queue of people waiting, each with an attendant porter and luggage on a barrow,

while two bearded individuals with grave and aggravating deliberation weighed each load and made out *Gepäck-Scheine*, as though Time and the perspiring public were their slaves, he began to regret that he had not come sooner.

"This is a rotten system," he was heard to murmur fretfully, as the minutes continued to fade into the past; and his wife, anxiously regarding the hardly diminished line, tried to comfort him with the thought that these people were probably also going by the same train as they themselves, but as a matter of fact they were all travelling in other directions and had several hours to spare.

The Englishman missed his train and had to wait four hours for another, which brought him and his wife to their destination at uncomfortable chilly small hours, and his previous conviction that "things are managed so much better over here"—that is, on the Continent—received a rude jolt. As neither he nor his wife spoke any language but their own, he resolved in future always to join a "personally conducted party," one of those unhappy groups of tourists of which one catches glimpses in picture galleries, on the steps of St. Peter's, shepherded sourly by an arrogant guide, who explains to them superciliously and erroneously as much of local history as he thinks good for them to hear, and pilots them, what time they think they are on their way to inspect a celebrated ruin, to a jeweller's shop where they are beguiled into buying hat-pins for their lady friends at

twice the price that they would cost if bought in London.

German stations strike English people by their size, their lightness, their airiness and, the more recently built, by their architectural beauty, also by their enormous restaurants crowded with people who sit eating and drinking in strange and curious ways. Ladies, in rather short skirts, obviously equipped for travel, with *Reise-Taschen* slung round their shoulders and a Baedeker peeping out of their pockets, sit imbibing from tall glass tankards pale-brown *Münchener-Bier* and eating *Belegtes Butter-Brödchen*—good-sized rolls of the shape and colour of a tea-cake, split in two, buttered on one side only, and containing slices of ham, beef, or *Wurst*. The *Belegtes Butter-Brödchen* is typically German. It is eaten by every class of society from Royalty downwards, and is always produced on every railway journey, and partaken of while held firmly in both hands, with the meat hanging out at one corner. It has a robust, satisfying appearance, and a German friend told me that she could travel for a day and a night without any other support than three *Butter-Brödchen*, especially if they were *belegt* with raw smoked ham, which gives an English person shivers when eating it for the first time.

The manners of people, not only in matters of food and drink but in their disposal of the same, are of continual interest. The Germans take a passionate interest in their food; they frankly enjoy eating and drinking, and encourage their children to do the same. They

think it no shame to display an eager appetite, and their table manners are certainly not so strictly controlled as those of other nations.

I once sat at table with a small girl of eight years of age, a daughter of one of the noblest families of the Fatherland, who—at a party, too—as she lay back in her chair calmly expelled the stones of the grapes she was eating in the least troublesome manner to herself, careless as to where they might fall. Projected in a continuous shower from her rosebud mouth, they speckled the table-cloth all round her plate, occasionally falling into her own or somebody else's lap; but nobody took any notice. They did not seem to think it was a matter to trouble over. Yet the German child is otherwise invariably well brought up, and treats its elders with a respect unknown in America and England. Little girls are taught to make *Knixes*, those neat little curtsies that one reads about in books of bygone days; they kiss the fingers of nice old-lady visitors; and the little boys will come and shake hands morning and evening, and very often, for no immediately apparent reason, during the day. They are not spoilt and over-indulged, nor allowed to develop on lines of their own choosing, but are early trained to either mental or physical hard work, and on the whole appear to enjoy life just as intensely as other children the world over.

Native-born Germans who have never been outside their own country, and many who have, take a certain pride in keeping to what they call their "*echt Alt-Deut-*

scher Sitten,"—good old German customs,—so they hold the fork upright in the left fist like a dagger while they cut up their meat, tuck their napkins inside their collars, dip their rolls and plum-cake into their morning coffee, with a pleasant consciousness of being left untouched by the insidious refinements of English and American civilization.

While Dernburg was Colonial Minister, a post he held for a very short time, he was once invited to the New Palace to dine with the Emperor, and the aristocratic Prussian officers, who resented his presence at the Royal table, spread abroad an unkind and I believe apocryphal story to the effect that on sitting down to table he was about to use his napkin in the familiar restaurant manner, girding it round his ample chest and putting it up to his chin, when the Emperor interposed with the remark, "Dernburg, *Hier wird man nicht rasiert*"—"We don't shave people here."

It is a quite improbable tale, but none the less had a great vogue in Berlin, being whispered maliciously everywhere by Dernburg's many enemies among the titled bureaucracy.

It was a journey on a Rhine steamer, taken in lovely sunny weather, which gave me my first glimpse into German life. The scenery of the Rhine is in some parts extremely picturesque, but very few of the passengers appeared to have any time to look at it. The livelong day they were joyously occupied in eating, and filled up the intervals by drinking some of the various cheap

wines of the district. The steamer was obviously just a floating restaurant, in every particular like the extraordinarily well-managed ones on shore. The passengers occasionally interrupted their meals to stand up and wave enthusiastic pocket-handkerchiefs to people in other steamers going in an opposite direction, who responded with that hearty and determined lavishness of enjoyment which strikes one as so kind and friendly in people who are perfect strangers to each other.

I was told by an agreeably informative German lady that it is considered a sign of deplorable ignorance and a grave omission of common courtesy if you do not keep your handkerchief ready for emergencies, and the promptitude with which each steamer as it approached broke out into a fluttering mass of white corroborated all she said. Every mother encouraged her child to "*winken mit dem Taschen-Tuch*," and the scenery glided past quite unnoticed, excepting perhaps when the Mouse Tower was passed, or one of the frequent *Denkmals* on the shore.

A very pretty English girl on the steamer had in the course of the day grown friendly with a handsome young German, a nice cultivated English-speaking boy, who grew hour by hour visibly more entangled by the girl's perfect profile, lovely clear pale skin, and deep dark eyes. He hardly allowed his ardent gaze to stray from her beautiful face, while she on her part, in a mood of cool acquiescence, suffered herself to be worshipped, while she calmly sipped golden *Mosel-Wein*. Suddenly the steamer

rounded a curve of the winding river, and a high bold rock came into sight.

"There!" cried the young man, starting forward with that pleasant German enthusiasm which sweeps one off one's feet. "There is the Lorelei rock! The Lorelei!" and he pointed across the river, his face aglow with rapture at the sight. Then he looked at the girl, waiting for her eyes to brighten with sympathy.

"What is it?" she said coldly.

"The Lorelei!" he said with emphasis. "The Lorelei!" He stammered a little as her expression remained cold. "You've heard of the Lorelei, haven't you? and the song about it that Heine wrote, '*Ich weiss nicht wass soll es bedeuten*'?"

He hummed it softly to himself, still looking at her face, still waiting for her to remember.

But she had never heard of the Lorelei nor of Heine, and continued to play with her wineglass and to eat plums in a callous kind of manner, while her adorer, visibly chilled and repelled, looked wistfully at the rock, then at the girl, and finally, turning from the side of the steamer, shrank together in his chair in a crushed and wilted attitude. No German girl would have failed him at such a moment. She would have sung with him about the lovely maiden who sits combing her golden hair—but the Englishwoman had missed the psychological moment. One felt instinctively that upon his youthful heart was imprinted a conviction of the hopeless inferiority of the British maiden, however beautiful, of

her deficiency in knowledge, tact, and above all in sentiment.

German sentiment! It can be, and frequently is, a very beautiful thing. Embodied in German poetry, it expresses some of the most exquisite emotions of human life; it touches domestic existence with a tender hand, and throws a golden glamour over the prosaic workaday world. It peoples every nook and corner of consciousness with an atmosphere of happiness which, though founded on illusion, yet is so universally accepted that it becomes almost real and adds a perfume to life. But occasionally it goes badly astray; it demands expression at inopportune moments and in unsuitable places, is often unconsciously absurd. It was, I believe, Lowell who remarked that a foreigner cannot help being struck with a certain incongruousness in German sentiment. And though in the past we too have been guilty of dedicating crockeryware "To a Good Child" or "To One I Love," when we took to tennis and bicycles we said a long farewell to the tendency to advertise our smaller emotions on articles of utility or decoration. But the German still clings tenaciously to these outlets: he finds it *rührend*—touching—to go on his travels with his umbrella and raincoat tied up in a holland bag inscribed in uneven cross-stitch by his wife or daughter with the legend "*Glückliche Reise*"—"A Happy Journey"; and a boy of sixteen or more will present his grandmother on her birthday with a large wooden tablet to hang on her bedroom wall

THE GERMAN CROWN PRINCE

upon which he has himself painfully poker-worked in Gothic letters the lines,

"Fang die Arbeit munter an
Dann ist sie schon halb gethan,"—

a couplet whose meaning is equivalent to our "Well begun, half done!"

When visiting a newly married couple, as soon as the front door is opened the crystallized good wishes of their numerous acquaintance meet one visibly on the threshold. A notice-board with "God bless the Young Pair" painted upon it in large letters stares at one over the umbrella rack, and every bit of available wall-space right up to the ceiling is filled by similar wooden boards echoing the same wish, or warmly commending the marriage state. "*Eignes Herd, Goldes Werth*" is a very favourite maxim, partly perhaps because it is short and easy to paint. The meaning of it is, "One's own fireside is worth gold."

In the windows of the high-class photographers of Berlin and other towns may be seen every day numerous portraits of recently engaged young couples—*Braut-Paar*, as they are called—belonging to the higher circles of society. Smiling officers in uniform gaze with rapture into the eyes of the maiden of their choice, and both radiate an atmosphere of ecstatic bliss which they obviously burn to share with the outer world. Errand-boys and *Dienst-Mädchen* pause on their way and gaze; brother-officers stop, fix an eyeglass, and recognizing a

friend will casually remark, "Oh, there is von Plankau and his *Braut*, they are just engaged."

That this conventional sentimentalism leads to a good deal of insincerity is hardly denied by the Germans themselves. The lady who brings a pot of pink tulips on your birthday and presents it with a nicely-rounded speech may be a person who detests you and makes no particular secret of it, but it will be none the less your duty to make tactful inquiries as to the date of her own appearance in the world and to bring her on that day, duly wrapped in heliotrope paper, a corresponding pot of carnations to mark the happy event. Yet the German method of making small domestic fêtes of unimportant occasions has a good deal of charm to recommend it, and it would be a very cynical person indeed who did not acknowledge that this phase of the German character is extraordinarily appealing to the unaccustomed stranger. However superficial the friendliness may have been that we experienced, however childish in its manifestations, we have to confess that it pleased and gratified us at the time, that we found it soothing to our *amour-propre*, very flattering to the part of our ego that likes to be thought of some importance in the small circle we adorn with our presence.

CHAPTER III

GERMAN MILITARISM

SOME time after my tour of the Rhine, I spent several years in Germany, and acquired by slow degrees a more intimate knowledge of its people and their national aspirations.

In the book mentioned in a previous chapter, which was written before the Great War began and published only a fortnight after it broke out, I have already told some of my experiences at the Prussian Court, where, in the summer of 1902, I became resident English governess to the Emperor's only daughter, Princess Victoria Louise of Prussia, now Duchess of Brunswick.

That book pretended to be nothing more than a mere chronicle of domestic events, and of some singularly happy years, the memory of which now strikes with a peculiar chill pain and heartache across the ghastly wreck of the world's happiness which has since then supervened.

It left untouched the many interesting aspects of German national life which presented themselves day by day, never advancing beyond the Court life and Court atmosphere.

Those calm days foreshadowed but vaguely the years that were to follow them, but even then one was dimly conscious of an uneasy, restless spirit abroad, which seemed to conceal potentialities of trouble; there were faint mutterings of the approaching storm, if one had only understood the signs of the times.

At the Emperor's Court I naturally found myself in the centre of what is called "German militarism," the expression of the idea that national power can only be upheld by physical force.

Potsdam, where the Court lived for the greater part of the year, is known to most people as a great military centre and enshrines in its old cobbled streets and stucco houses standing on each side of the placid tree-shaded canal, memories of Frederick the Great, who lived here at the palace of Sans Souci when not engaged on one of his numerous campaigns.

When I first came to the Court I suffered from the usual British ignorances and prejudices, and I remember sympathizing with a teacher who mentioned the tax she paid out of her salary.

"We don't have to begin to pay taxes in England," I said, "until our income gets a good deal higher than that."

"Oh," she replied smilingly, "we pay this willingly. It is an *Ehren-Taxe*—a tax of honour—we are glad to pay it. It is for the defence of the Fatherland. No one thinks of grumbling. We all contribute gladly to what is for our own security."

And what she said I often heard repeated, though occasionally fathers of large families were not quite so cheerful over it as she had been; but they were evidently trained to look on it as a "tax of honour," of which no right-thinking person would try to shirk payment. Nothing was so striking among the German people as their identity of thought on all public matters.

That the geographical position of the Empire, open to attack east and west, necessitated an efficient army was to the entire German nation a self-evident fact outside the pale of discussion.

"It's all very well for you English to talk about disarmament," said a young officer to me once, "but where should *we* be if we disarmed, with the French on one side eager to seize Elsass-Löthringen (Alsace-Lorraine) and the Russians on the other side of us none too friendly? Besides, we don't want to depend on friendliness, we want to depend on our good right arm"—here he shook his fist—"we Germans fear God and nobody else." This climax to his sentence rounded it off nicely and enabled him to throw out his chest in the appropriate attitude of those who utter noble and patriotic sentiments. Having heard and seen this phrase so often—I believe Bismarck first set it going—I was not much impressed, and even tried to show its fundamental untrustworthiness and lack of confirmation.

"You don't fear God," I said. "Most of you don't believe in Him, or if you do, you create one to your own liking—seven-tenths Bismarck and Clausewitz, and the

rest made up of recollections of the old bloodthirsty heathen deities of Valhalla, of Thor and Siegfried—and as for Alsace-Lorraine, it never has been anything but a worry and plague since you've had it. It's your own bad consciences, I expect, not the French, that make you so apprehensive. You know in your own hearts that you would never rest while a part of Germany was in the hands of an alien enemy."

"But Elsass-Löthringen used to *be* part of Germany. It was taken away by Louis XIV."

"Well, the people don't feel German—they feel French."

"The people!" he exclaimed, with much disdain; "who cares what they feel? What do they know about such matters? It is their own fault if they are treated with severity. Do you know what they do? When we conquered them they were a German-speaking race, and ever since then they've all learnt French—pretend they can't speak German!"

He looked at me as though he doubted if I would believe him.

"Well, doesn't that show that they feel they *are* French?" I persisted.

Then he took refuge in Ireland. Any German officer driven into a corner in argument with the English invariably lands in Ireland. It is his chief refuge, and his misconceptions and ignorances as to the cause of Irish political discontent are almost as bad as those of the average English person. If we don't understand

THE DUCHESS OF BRUNSWICK (PRINCESS VICTORIA LOUISE OF PRUSSIA) YOUNGEST CHILD AND ONLY DAUGHTER OF THE GERMAN EMPEROR

the Irish question ourselves, unfortunate Germans, wandering helplessly among the turgid verbiage of our party newspapers, must remain hopelessly mystified. Still it is characteristic of the German mind to evolve *some* kind of clear theory out of the most unpromising mental chaos, and if this theory happens to be wrong, as it often is, it does not really matter to the German; he prefers to work to a false theory rather than to none at all, and will make astonishingly effective plans to meet contingencies which are never likely to arise, all of which contributes to keep alive in him that mental alertness which he recognizes as a very necessary ingredient of an officer's utility.

The man who related the hypothetical case of the different methods of the English, French, and German when required to draw a camel, a beast with which all three were unacquainted, hit upon the chief German national characteristic when he described the Teuton as "evolving the animal out of his inner consciousness." The German evolves a quantity of things besides camels out of his inner consciousness, and by a process of logical reasoning does not get so far from the mark as might be expected. There is no doubt that that camel would approximate, if not in structure, yet in its most important characteristics, to the real thing.

In England we have a totally wrong impression of the German military ideal. We believe the German people to be groaning and sighing under the burden of conscription and anxious to escape from it. We talk

of Germans emigrating to England or America or other countries to escape military service. This may be the reason they give, it is so ready to hand that it is naturally seized upon before anything else, and we in our simplicity accept it as obvious, without giving any thought to the matter. As a rule the German who has left his country "to avoid military service" will probably have some still more important reason in the background. No decent German citizen, of whatever class, ever tried to avoid his *Dienst.* On the contrary, he is keen and anxious to contribute, as he believes, to the safety of the Fatherland.

One day a woman, the wife of a workman, who often did small dressmaking-jobs for me, came to my rooms to "try on" a blouse, looking rather agitated and upset. When I asked the reason she with difficulty restrained her tears.

"*Ach! gnädiges Fräulein!*" she said, "the *Gendarm* has been to my house, saying my son has been trying to evade his military service, and asking why he did not report himself at the proper time—my son whose greatest desire (*heissesten Wünsch*) is to serve! He can hardly wait till the time comes, and *so ein Kerl*—such a fellow—to come to me and say things like that—my son who is so patriotic and——" Here she broke down and sobbed, after an interval explaining that the mistake arose because her eldest son had died, and it was his name that had not been removed from the military register.

"But to accuse *us*—honourable, respectable people

like *us*—of such a thing," she sniffed, sticking pins, in her agitation, into my arms; "as if *we* were likely to do such a thing, and my son so eager and so looking forward——"

"But he is your only son now, isn't he?" I asked.

"Yes, now since *der Johann* died, of course he is our only one and not obliged to serve, but, *gnädiges Fräulein*, it would break his heart not to go; and besides, you see, they get on much better afterwards. He hopes for a post on the *Eisenbahn*—the railway—so he must do his service or he can't get it, and he is such a clever boy. He's sure to get on. Every one says so."

What she said was true. His chances in life would be immeasurably improved after his year's service. I never met a single German youth who did not look upon his military training as a matter of course. Agitated mothers would sometimes, it is true, deplore the fact that their darling sons would have to be out in all weathers, bearing hardships to which they were not accustomed, but as a rule they met with little sympathy.

Still I noticed that the enthusiasm with which the recruits joined the army was completely overshadowed by the delirious joy with which they left it. After the big autumn manœuvres were over in September, the culminating point and test of the year's work, at which the Emperor was invariably present, trains loaded with home-going soldiers, sun-browned young men from twenty to twenty-two, looking very fit and healthy, would pass along the line which ran through a field behind the New Palace, one of the few grass gallops in the neigh-

bourhood where the little Princess delighted to ride. These trains were filled with cheering, yelling youths whose shouting almost drowned the shrieks of the engine; they hung out of every window in perilous positions, quite disregarding the command inscribed on every carriage, "*Nicht hinaus lehnen*"; they waved their caps and hands joyfully out of the window at everybody they saw, at every cow in the fields, at every dog. At intervals the cheers rose in a crescendo wave of sound like thunder, and one had glimpses, in the thickly packed carriages, as of men performing wonderful gymnastics upside down. Sometimes a pair of legs would gyrate wildly at the windows and occasionally a very daring spirit would clamber outside and move along the top of the carriage to one a few yards farther down.

"Why are they all so very jolly?" I asked the Princess the first time that we saw them, as we were galloping down the Grüner Allée.

"I suppose because they're so glad they've finished their service," replied the Princess, a little ruefully, for it is never admitted at the Prussian Court that a soldier ever gets tired of his service, and longs for a normal non-military existence.

Certainly the world is governed by illusion, and Truth still resides in remote hidden places of the earth.

In the rarefied Court atmosphere in which I moved, it was an accepted article of faith that every soldier of the Emperor's army became at once, through his

training, an honourable, upright man, imbued with a penetrating love of his Fatherland and ready to sacrifice his life with joy for his Kaiser. This creed was accepted so naturally as a self-evident fact that I sometimes wished that the ladies of the Court who had such an implicit faith in the noble spirit and angelic qualities of the individuals of their army could have read some of the anonymous letters that were almost daily to be found in the letter-bag of the little Princess, written by soldiers to the daughter of their Emperor. In the absence of the *Ober-Gouvernante* it was my unpleasant duty to go through these epistles, which needed very careful sifting. Some of them were harmless enough, chiefly picture-post-cards smelling dreadfully of very bad tobacco, and inscribed with "Greetings to Her Royal Highness Princess Victoria Louise of Prussia from her very loyal subject (*alleruntertänigste*) Otto Kramm, now serving in the 15th Regiment of Infantry, at Colmar." Usually Monday morning brought a large crop of such messages, evidently written during the Sunday-evening leisure at some *Garten-Restaurant.* One indefatigable young man sent to the Princess all the used picture-post-cards, many of them beer-stained and of course highly tobacco-scented, which he could collect from his friends, and as Germany is a country where these articles are very cheap and the postage costs, for a short distance, only the tenth of a penny, every month there arrived from him a bulky package. They were usually at once consigned to the waste-paper basket

or given to the footman to be burnt, for they were obviously very insanitary and bore a good many thumb-marks; and the fact that these gifts were not altogether the offerings of a purely patriotic heart was revealed after some time, when the enterprising soldier, having fired off a salvo of extra-lurid picture-post-cards, followed them up by a humble request that the Princess should use her influence to enable him to obtain the rank of *Unter-Offizier*—equivalent to Corporal—which had hitherto eluded him. Other letters came from enthusiastic schoolgirls who often wrote very charmingly, but it is sad to relate that few were entirely disinterested expressions of loyalty, the lofty sentiments and assurances of deep devotion usually, alas! being a preliminary to a request for some long-desired object, often the cast-off clothes or toys of the Princess.

In the case of letters written by people in apparent need, inquiries were usually made and suitable help given. But there were always among the correspondence a few letters which were ultimately handed over to the police; they often ran into several sheets and were of such a foul, unsavoury nature that their mere perusal left one with a sense of being besmirched with unutterable filthiness. They were always from soldiers serving in the army, obviously degenerates and men of weak mind, and why these horrible letters should have been written to a little girl of tender years, is one of those mysteries which it is difficult to understand. I remember sending some of them over to one of the gentle-

men of the Empress, whose duty it was to see that they were forwarded to the proper quarter. He was a splendid type of an honourable, upright German, and had been wounded in the foot during the Franco-Prussian War. He acted as Extra-Gentleman-in-Waiting, and only came on duty a few weeks of each year in the summer-time when the Emperor was in Norway and the Empress travelling or staying at Rominten. I remember the sad face with which he said, alluding to the letters:

"How could one have imagined human nature to be so vile?"

After the year 1906, when the vicious youthful practices of some of the men of the Emperor's immediate entourage were revealed by Maximilian Harden, a scandal which, however, did not reflect on the Kaiser himself, the letters from the soldiers became nauseous reflections of the loathsome details recorded in the contemporary newspapers, and were, if possible, more revolting than usual.

I only mention these disagreeable matters, which were as much as possible ignored, because they were in contradiction to the prevailing idea at Court that every soldier is necessarily a man whose character has been purged of the grosser elements, and in whose soul burns the pure fire of patriotism and self-sacrifice. That this is the ideal set before every man who enters the German Army is not to be denied, that a large percentage of the better-educated class during their military service

strive to live up to this ideal, or at least persuade themselves that they do, may also be conceded. There is perhaps a certain gramophone quality observable in all German patriotic sentiments, but it is, I believe, none the less sincere; yet military discipline, especially German military discipline, which is extremely merciless and severe, can never eradicate, but only temporarily repress, natural tendencies. This obvious truth, however, was not admitted in the atmosphere of the Court, where the soldier was put on a very high pinnacle indeed.

This was partly due to the fact that all the footmen of the Court had served in the army and were naturally men picked out for conspicuous honesty and faithfulness, though some of them, it must be admitted, were extraordinarily thick-headed. They were the cream of the army, good-looking, tall, well-educated, being nearly all of them *Ein-jähriger* or one-year men, which presupposes a certain cultivated intelligence enabling them to pass the necessary examination which exempts them from one of the two years of service to which men who have not been able to arrive at a certain educational standard are liable.

When I first arrived at the Prussian Court I was so deplorably ignorant of military matters that I had actually never seen the goose-step, and was first introduced to it by my young pupil, who, on the first wet day after my arrival, amused herself for a short time by performing sentry-go up and down the *Turn-Saal* with her brother Prince Joachim.

Assuming the usual masculine privilege, the Prince constituted himself corporal, giving the word of command, "*Augen rechts, Augen links, Parade-Schritt, Präsentirt das Gewehr!*"—and, being the only other person present, I was the recipient of more military honours during the next half-hour than is ever likely again to fall to my lot.

I am still unaware if the goose-step is yet preserved as part of English military training, but to those to whom it is unknown, I may explain that it is called in Germany *Parade-Schritt*, and only used on occasions of ceremony or when troops are passing Royalty or officers of high rank. It consists in marching with the knee-joint perfectly straight and gives a highly-curious strutting, stilted, jerking, waddling gait, which, especially when seen from the rear, is to the unaccustomed observer highly ludicrous, as the performers have an appearance of trying to throw away their own feet. It is accompanied by loud stamping, and every day when the Court was in Berlin, during the ceremony of changing the guard at one o'clock, the *Hof*, or centre yard, paved with hard, round cobble stones, around which the Royal Schloss is built, resounded and echoed to martial music and the heavy rhythmic tread of the soldiers' feet, till the windows rattled and the solid walls seemed to shake. I believe this "Parade-step" was invented by Frederick the Great and copied by other nations at a time when, as the cynical monarch remarks in his "Confessions," "the world gave themselves up for lost if their military did not move head, legs, and arms, *à la mode* of the Prussian

exercise. All my soldiers and my officers took it into their heads that they were twice the men they were before on seeing they were everywhere aped."

Another wet day of those first years comes into my mind, when the little Princess was wandering through the State apartments of the Berlin Schloss with some of her young cousins who were on a visit. She stopped on the white-marble staircase to point out with pride one of the large military pictures hanging there, painted by Anton von Werner, where a charging squadron of Uhlans, in beautiful brand-new blue and red uniforms, with highly-polished buttons and accoutrements, mounted on specklessly well-groomed, prancing horses, whose shimmering coats reflected the bright blue sky above, occupied the forefront of the picture. Around them bombs were exploding picturesquely but harmlessly, and at a discreet distance in the rear there was a suggestion of fallen men and horses, while a further concession to the supposed realities of war was permitted in a thin trickle of blood flowing from beneath the helmet of the leading Uhlan. It was one of those pictures obviously painted by artists who judge of war by peace conditions and dare not, even if they would, reveal any of its tragic features, its bloodshed and ghastliness and horror of mangled limbs and torn flesh. It had a bright varnished appearance and was calculated to inspire unsophisticated youth with ideas of the splendour, the magnificence, of war.

The children stood in a row, looking at the painting,

which nearly covered the entire wall of the landing, the little girls hand in hand, while the boys in their sailor suits hung over the marble balustrade and criticized the picture.

"Look at that man in front, with his sword flashing. Isn't he splendid?" cried the little Prussian Princess, with a proprietary air. "Papa had this picture painted; he told the artist how it was to be done. Isn't it fine?"

Her face was aglow with patriotic pride. It was thus that she imagined German soldiers always riding to victory, as they did on parade, with pennons flying, and the sun glinting from their lance-heads.

"Father says war isn't like that at all," objected little Max of Hesse, "it's not so clean and bright—and the shells tear the men and horses to pieces, and it's horrible. He says no one dare paint war-pictures as they really are—it would be discouraging for the soldiers."

"How silly you are, Max!" said the Princess. "Of course papa must know how it ought to be painted, and he says it's very good. And the soldiers do look like that—I've seen them galloping just as they do here." And Prince Joachim agreed too that the soldiers at reviews or on manœuvres were exactly like those in the picture.

"Papa sent Herr von Werner to look at the last manœuvres, so that he could see exactly how it should be done," persisted the Princess.

Prince Max still looked unconvinced, but said no more. He could not foresee, poor little boy, that when the Great War broke out he would be one of its earliest

victims. He was a bright, sunny little fellow, of a quaint humour and quiet common sense, the eldest of six brothers, children of the Emperor's sister, Princess Frederick Charles of Hesse, who was the youngest and favourite daughter of the Empress Frederick.

There were a good many of these sprawling canvases, of little artistic merit but portraying triumphant moments of Prussian history; and in one of the galleries was a picture of a well-known general on horseback with Fame allegorically attired as an angel floating in the sky above him with a laurel wreath in her hand, with which she was obviously about to enwreathe his brows, while in the background the smoke and flames of burning villages were to be seen ascending heavenwards. Crowds of peasants lay heaped about in attitudes of death or acute misery, but the smiling, about-to-be-crowned conqueror had his back turned toward all these unpleasant incidents, for which, though plainly responsible, he seemed to repudiate all liability.

CHAPTER IV

THE GERMAN SOLDIER

"YOUR army fights for pay, ours for love of the Fatherland."

How often have I heard this speech from Germans, especially from German children, who, like children everywhere, delight to flap the flag of their country in the faces of persons of other nationalities.

"Our soldiers are all volunteers," I of course would reply. "Yours are obliged to serve whether they want to or not."

"But yours serve for pay," they always continued stoutly.

"They could earn a good deal more by not being soldiers," I would maintain, battling as in duty bound for my own people; "and if it comes to that, your soldiers are paid too."

"No, indeed they're not," would answer the screaming chorus; "they serve from *Vaterlandsliebe*, not for money."

The tone of scorn in which the word "money" was pronounced showed the depth of their contempt for English soldiers.

"Your soldiers—private soldiers," I would persist, "get fivepence a week pocket money, ours get a shilling a day: we should think scorn to pay brave men so little as you do. And as for the officers, they don't work for nothing in your army either; they are paid, so try not to talk nonsense."

The reminder that their officers received money left them speechless, because they knew it was true.

"Still, ours do it for love; everybody has to serve if he is wanted," they would continue helplessly.

"Well, *none* of ours *has* to do it, so those that do *must* do it for love," I answer, trying to believe that what I am saying is true, and thinking of the many other than patriotic motives—crime, despair, want, and love—that often drive men into the army.

The little Princess at an early stage of our acquaintance was an ardent upholder of the German military system, and a most bitter critic of the British Army; but later on she modified her opinions, and became an admirer of, at any rate, the British officer, and, after her visit to England, of the British soldier.

German patriotism is a carefully cherished plant in the Fatherland, not left nor expected to grow spontaneously, but the seeds of it are sown with much care, in well prepared soil. It is "intensively cultivated" with all the patient, painstaking, glowing enthusiasm of the German race, and the results justify the methods employed; for the diverse units of which the German Empire is composed have attained a solidarity,

in spite of intrinsic differences of character, a unity of mind and purpose, an absolute unanimity of national ideal which no other country can boast.

Every soldier in the Fatherland is trained not only to be an excellent soldier, but an excellent patriot; he is taught—if he does not already know them—the songs which breathe an ardent passionate love of his Emperor and country; his barrack walls are hung with pictures showing, in greatly exaggerated colours and with an obvious lack of correct military knowledge on the part of the artist, famous incidents in the history of his regiment, melodramatic moments where a triumphant German, in a spick-and-span uniform, on a highly-groomed horse, with a complete absence of bloodshed or any of the messy incidents which characterize real warfare, is killing, single-handed, a dozen Frenchmen who lie in neat rows in front of him. However ignorant and muddle-headed a German recruit may be,—and some of those who come from East and West Prussia are of a primitive and bucolic thick-headedness which is almost incredible,—he is carefully and painstakingly taught, not only his drill, but is instructed in all that can increase his intelligence, that can inspire him with a feeling of national pride. The deeds of the heroes of the past are used to stimulate him to similar deeds in the future. He may be an unpromising piece of raw material, but he is taken in hand by the big military machine and kneaded into something a good deal better than he was before—that is, if he meets with the ordinary normal treatment

of the army; but it cannot be denied that a great deal of overt brutality exists among the non-commissioned officers which, when discovered, is severely punished, but for the most part evades detection. By a little change of the system these sporadic brutalities might be more easily discovered and suppressed, but it is useless to pretend that they do not exist, though sternly discouraged. But this makes no difference to the general trend of a German soldier's existence, which is all in the direction of increased efficiency in the matter of health, intelligence, and last, but not least, in the stimulation of a somewhat narrow spirit of patriotism, the kindling in his heart, if it does not yet exist, of the belief that the German Empire is superior to every other country in the world, that the German people are the wisest and the best, and that to the present Emperor all these superior qualities are due.

Bernhardi tells us the obvious truth that "Military service not only educates nations in warlike capacity, but it develops the intellectual and moral qualities generally for the occupations of peace. It educates a man to the full mastery of his body, to the exercise and improvement of his muscles; it develops his mental powers, his self-reliance and readiness of decision; it accustoms him to order and subordination for a common end; it elevates his self-respect and courage, and thus his capacity for every kind of work.

"It is quite a perverted view that the time devoted to military service deprives economic life of forces which

could have been more appropriately and more profitably employed elsewhere. These forces are not withdrawn from economic life, but are trained for economic life."

And we must agree that Germany, with her easy-going, pleasure-loving population, without the stimulus of sport—for in spite of the fact that sport during the last few years has been increasingly practised by a certain class of Germans, it has as yet left the mass of the people absolutely uninterested and untouched—would, without military training, hardly have risen to the place she occupied in public estimation before the war began.

The first German soldier I ever met was in the fortress of Ehrenbreitstein. He was carrying a bowl of soup which he regarded with affection, and he leered bucolicly as he passed our small group of tourists. He looked brown and healthy and rather stupid, and his blue coat, with red collar and cuffs, fitted him very badly, but his white linen trousers gave a pleasant air of coolness to his attire, and when, after turning a curve of the road which led up to the citadel, we came on a big gateway with other similarly-dressed soldiers under it, apparently engaged in tickling each other, we thought that the severity of German militarism had been exaggerated. These nice, brown-faced boys, grinning at large, seemed too lazy, too slow, too good-tempered, to be a danger to anyone. One felt an instinctive liking for the childish simplicity of their manners, but when an officer came out, they became so immediately stiff and wooden, fell with such promptitude into the correct military attitude,

their very eyes growing glassy and staring, that one had glimpses of what training will make of a man, how the clod-like instincts of these docile boys could be utilized by the man with the superior brain-power. He could command hundreds of them—thousands—as many as he pleased, and each one, being only "a simple soldier," not desiring, nor being encouraged to think out things for himself, would blindly do as he was told, leaving the responsibility to those whose business it was to arrange affairs.

Years after, at the New Palace, Potsdam, I lived surrounded by soldiers, falling to sleep every night with the step of the sentry beneath my bedroom window mingling with my dreams. One woke sometimes to hear the rain thrashing down, or in the winter-time to hear the wind bringing great flurries of snow against the double windows, and turned over in bed with a pitying thought for the young soldiers whose duty it was to patrol the terrace outside the Palace windows from sunset to dawn, relieved, of course, every two hours. In very bitter weather they were supplied with fur-lined boots and gloves and an extra heavy top-coat. In the moonlight one sometimes could peep between the curtains and see them coming on or going off guard, tramping with difficulty through the thick snowdrifts.

No one could pass in or out of the Palace grounds without a duly authorized entrance-card, the date of which was sometimes changed every year and sometimes not. The card with which I was first provided

lasted for five years, then one day, on showing it to the sentry, he slammed the gate in my face and refused to allow me in. As, being a resident of the Palace, I happened to have a pass-key in my pocket which enabled me to open all locked gates, I was not much perturbed, and as there was one of these gates leading into the garden close at hand, I unlocked it under the nose of the sentry and passed through, anxiously watching him out of the corner of my eye the while, and choosing an adjacent bush as "cover" in case he should think it his duty to raise his rifle and shoot me. If, as occasionally happened, I had neither pass-key nor entrance-card, it was necessary to tell the sentry to ring a bell which communicated with the guard-room, and one of the guard was sent to escort me to the Palace itself. I believe I ought to have been conducted to the porter's room and handed over to a footman, who then became responsible for me; but as the entrance to my own rooms was arrived at long before we reached the *Portier-Stube*, I generally slipped through the open glass door and went upstairs, while the soldier no doubt wondered where I had disappeared, for doors and windows were all alike and stood wide open in the summer-time. One conscientious youth, in his search for me,—perhaps, too, haunted by fears that I might be a possible anarchist whom he must run to ground,—penetrated as far as the apartment of the Princess, where his somewhat confused inquiry for *Die Dame* was met by a severe scolding for being where he had no business, and he was threatened

with severe punishment by an angry footman who called him a "*Dummer Kerl*"—a stupid fellow. All messengers with parcels were thus escorted into and out of the Palace, also all visitors, even those who came in carriages.

Sometimes the ladies-in-waiting were very angry if they happened to have been out walking and forgotten their cards, at being thus ignominiously kept waiting and treated rather rudely by the sentries, who had no idea how to combine firmness with urbanity; but the Emperor only laughed if they complained, singing the praises of the soldiers for their unflinching zeal. In Berlin Schloss, on the contrary, one might walk in and out all day without any trouble. It was only after nightfall that a card was necessary, not only for coming in but for going out of the court-yard.

In Wilhelmshöhe the sentries were posted in the evenings close up to the front door in the middle of the big façade of the Palace, under a large stone portico; and on one occasion, when the Empress had ordered supper to be laid under the portico, when she came out she found a sentry at each end of the table presenting arms, both of them evidently prepared to stay there and watch over her safety for the rest of the evening. We had to wait for supper till the officer of the guard was summoned and the soldiers posted a little farther off, somewhere round the corner where they would be equally useful and less in the way.

When out riding early in the summer mornings in the fields lying on the outskirts of Potsdam, I frequently

had glimpses of the pleasantest part of the soldier's training. Uhlans with fluttering pennons would gallop along the open cart-tracks in the fields which run between rows of beautiful trees, or a battery of artillery in a cloud of dust emerged into view, the horses' coats shining, the men sitting on the gun-limbers hot and dusty and cheery-looking. Often they were out at four o'clock in the morning, so that by nine, when it was already hot with the stuffy, heavy, Continental heat of summer, the chief part of the day's work would be done. In the afternoons one might see the soldiers hanging out of the barrack windows, smoking, or looking at the passers-by. Once, and only once, did I see some German soldiers kicking a football about, but with a dismal air, as of men performing a duty with determination and goodwill but no enthusiasm. I suspect somehow that they had been ordered by the Highest Military Power in Germany to take to football as a suitable recreation and didn't quite know how to play the game—also I should imagine that when a German soldier has got through his day's work he prefers something less strenuous. There is, as a matter of fact, a German species of *Fuss-Ball* played by schoolboys, which is a mere faint shadow of the English game, and is, as the Germans themselves call it, a *Kinder-Spiel*—a game for children.

I have vivid memories, too, of croquet as played from what may be called the Early-German standpoint. It was on a small court of rather uneven sand, and the participants were the Princess and her school-companions,

the three little girls from the neighbouring Augusta-Stift who came every day to share her lessons. When I suggested playing on the grass, the Princess was shocked at the idea. She said it would spoil it, and papa would be very angry. The rather battered-looking hoops appeared to have been bent open so as to facilitate the passage of the balls, and were almost twice as wide at the bottom as a regulation hoop should be. The "elliptical billiard-balls" of the "Mikado" might have been paralleled by ours, which seemed to have suffered severely from ill-usage; and when, under the guidance of the Princess, who said she was "awfully fond of the game," I saw the little girls all merrily croqueting each other, with one foot on the ball in the good old-fashioned Early-Victorian way reminiscent of the crinoline period in back volumes of "Punch," my heart sank a little, and I stood hesitating and wondering if tactful interference on my part would be of any good.

When presently one unskilled performer hammered her foot instead of the ball, I ventured to make a remark.

"You know," I said firmly, "nobody plays croquet in this way now—the rules have been altered. Don't you think you'd like to learn the proper way?" It struck me as soon as I had said it that the word "proper" was perhaps tactless and ill-chosen. The sequence showed I was right.

"No, this is the proper *German* way," replied the Princess, who I am convinced had no experience what-

ever of "German" croquet. "You can play *your* way in England, *we* play the *German* way."

"But there is no such thing as 'German' or 'English' croquet," I replied, laughing,—"there's just croquet. What you are playing isn't real croquet—the real game is much more amusing."

However, they stuck to what they pleased to call "German croquet," till one day the Empress arrived in the middle of the game, and joining in it swept to the four winds all their theories. She knew what croquet was, and laughed at what she called their "*ganz veralteter*"—quite old-fashioned—ideas on the subject. She ordered a brand-new croquet set "made in England," and though we had to continue playing on the sand of the *Spiel-Platz*, with a "giant's-stride" in the middle and parallel bars at each side, which somewhat circumscribed our movements and necessitated certain modifications of the game, until the Princess a few years later, with characteristic energy, took to tennis, croquet remained a very favourite amusement. When, later on, she met English friends who were croquet enthusiasts, it always amused me to hear her talk with them of the game, knowing that her ideas were of the sandy *Spiel-Platz* full of inequalities and obstacles, while theirs were of a lawn smooth as a billiard-table, of Prize Meetings and championships, of a scientifically played game hedged about with innumerable rules and formalities.

I noticed the Princess was always a little contemptuous of the English love of croquet, while the

English on their side were slightly bewildered; but they were each obviously thinking of different things, and suffering from the mutual misunderstandings which arise from want of knowledge.

To return to the German soldier as I knew him in peace-time. It is a common error in England to believe that every fit man of military age in Germany is trained. This, however, is not so, as there are always a great many more men available than are necessary to keep up the strength of the army, this even in view of the fact that exemption from service is granted in the case of only sons of a widowed mother, or men who can prove that their help is needed to support their brothers, sisters, or parents. Every German, however, from seventeen to twenty-one, and from thirty-nine to forty-five, is a member of the *Landsturm*—a force which is only to be called out in the last necessity. Those Germans chosen as soldiers must remain three years with the cavalry, two with the infantry. If they pass the necessary examination before leaving school, their service is shortened respectively by one year.

Once, when walking with the little Princess and her brother in the garden of Bellevue, we came upon some men cutting down a tree which they afterwards loaded upon a cart. Naturally the children were much interested in the proceedings, and remained some time looking on. The governor of the Prince, a young Prussian lieutenant who was with us, asked the stalwart young woodman who was directing the work in which regiment

he had served, and the man in very apologetic tones replied that he had never served at all, as unfortunately the day before he should have presented himself at his recruiting station he had the misfortune to break his leg. He was, I believe, perfectly sincere in his expressions of regret, and the lieutenant confided to me how very grieved he felt that such a fine soldier should have been lost to the army.

The German non-commissioned officer receives a very careful training. Just a short distance outside the New Palace stands the big Augusta-Victoria Kaserne, the barracks where was lodged the *Lehr-Bataillon*, consisting of promising young soldiers who were likely to make good instructors. They were sent here to be trained in their manifold military duties, and appeared to be very keen, intelligent-looking young men, who took life very seriously. Sometimes, when I went for a stroll in the neighbouring cornfields, I would come across them struggling to teach young recruits how to shoot. Their targets always struck me as primitive. They were just the outline of a man cut out life-size in wood and painted in bright blues and yellows. It was one of the duties of a corporal in command of a squad of men outside barracks to report to any officer he might meet, the number, regiment, and business on which he and his men were engaged, and as all the sons of the Emperor at ten years of age were made lieutenants in infantry regiments, soldiers had to report to them the same as to other officers. It was rather startling and a little tiresome when Prince

Joachim was going for a walk with his sister and a passing file of soldiers would appear round the corner, suddenly stop, come to attention, and the foremost one, looking rather scared, begin to shout out in the orthodox stentorian military tone the information that "one corporal and two private soldiers of the 18th Regiment of Infantry now on their way to——"

At this point Prince Joachim would usually interpose and intimate that he would dispense with any further report; but the man generally preferred to finish, and recited the rest of his story as the Prince and his sister hurried on, leaving the corporal to finish at his leisure. Once the Prince and Princess emerged from the Palace gates riding on donkeys, and accompanied by a young lady-in-waiting who was similarly mounted. The donkeys were not very well trained animals, and after the manner of their kind took a very zigzag, indirect course over the road, quite regardless of tugs at the bridle. The party was feeling very hilarious, when just at the moment when all three donkeys began to exhibit an invincible tendency to keep on turning round, four soldiers, obviously on military duty, were to be seen approaching, walking in single file one behind the other. The donkeys, as though moved by a common impulse, continued to gyrate slowly but relentlessly in various eccentric orbits, while the soldiers, without moving a muscle of their faces, continued to advance, halted at a spot which the corporal evidently judged to be outside the danger zone, and there, with the precision of a

PRINCE JOACHIM OF PRUSSIA, SIXTH SON OF THE GERMAN EMPEROR

machine, in the usual short staccato tones, he gave details of himself and men and of the military duty they were about to perform. Once he was interrupted, when one of the donkeys with the annoying tactlessness of its kind backed into him and nearly swept him into the ditch; but he managed to evade the danger, and, resuming his martial attitude a few paces farther back, completed his report.

The three riders were by this time helpless with laughter and quite unable to exercise any restraining influence over their steeds, and the highly disorganized cavalcade were at last relieved from their embarrassing situation by the donkeys, evidently home-sick for their stable, taking sudden and precipitate flight in the direction of the Palace.

Often in the summer-time, in her drives about the villages that lie in the neighbourhood of Potsdam, the little Princess would be delighted to come upon *Einquartierung* — that is, soldiers billeted for one or two nights in a village. Perhaps it would be part of a battery of artillery, the guns placed on the little village green in front of the church, with a sentry keeping guard over them. In the big farm-yard, soldiers could be seen, busy cleaning horses and saddlery; and outside every cottage men, women, and children were standing smiling at the soldiers. Although the sum paid for the food and lodging of a soldier is very small, yet the peasants seem to enjoy the stir and excitement, and as most of them have sons or relations of their own serving in the army, they give

as a rule, of their best, and feel a certain pleasant sense of proprietorship in the big military machine.

As a rule, *Ein-quartierung* took place in the early summer, when the barns were empty, so that there was plenty of accommodation for the horses; while the men, if there was not sufficient accommodation in the houses, also slept in sheds and stables. The troops on the march were usually regiments of cavalry or artillery, moving by road from one point to another, training for the great Kaiser-Manöver, which was held in September after the harvest was gathered in, when the bare, unfenced stubble-fields were least liable to damage from the numberless men, horses, and guns which passed over them. Sufficient but not generous compensation was invariably paid to the peasants whose fields suffered; and every year the Kaiser-Manöver, the culminating test of the year's military work, was held in a different district, so that the troops should learn to accustom themselves to unknown conditions. Map-reading is one of the arts in which the German soldier has always been diligently trained and exercised.

CHAPTER V

THE GERMAN OFFICER

UPON my former acquaintanceship with various types of German officer I look back with mixed feelings. The best type was so invariably charming and cultured, but when one encountered the worst—the small petty-minded person dressed, not in a little brief authority but in a permanent one, safeguarded from all attacks—he often proved to be an extraordinarily hateful and contemptible specimen of humanity, of a calibre of mind hard to realize by those who never met him. Between these two extremes, the very good and the very bad, were many other types—amiable and industrious young men, living anxiously on small means, fervently hoping to have the luck to fall in love with a lady who would have enough private fortune to bring their united incomes up to the minimum sum upon which the German Government permits officers of the army to marry.

Potsdam may be considered the central stronghold of Prussian militarism.

Close to the Garrison Church, where rest in a curious little crypt behind the pulpit the ashes of Frederick the

Great beside those of his irascible, child-beating father, is the wide, arid parade-ground—still called the *Lust-Garten*—from which that same irritable parent incontinently swept away all the shrubs and flower-beds, so that he might have a place close under the windows of the Stadt-Schloss, which he inhabited in summer, to drill the tall soldiers of whom he was so fond. Carlyle's praise of this extraordinary king has always appeared to me highly exaggerated and not justified by facts, and it has had a curious effect on the German mind, especially the military mind. From his ill-treatment of his son, Frederick the Great, Germans generally seem to have deduced the inference that the ill-usage of the father, the cruel severity verging on murder which he exhibited towards his unfortunate son in his childhood and early youth, were the chief factors in developing the military genius and intelligent statesmanship with which Frederick is universally credited.

It was Prince Joachim's governor who first made me acquainted with this point of view. He no doubt thought that I should be very pleased to hear that Carlyle was the man who, so to speak, "discovered" the splendid qualities and underlying good intentions not immediately apparent on the surface of Frederick William I of Prussia's eccentric activities.

"I think he was a horrid, cruel, bad-tempered wretch," I remarked, forgetting for the moment that I was speaking of a crowned member of the Hohenzollern family. "It was purely temper that made him behave

as he did. I've known lots of other people go on in just the same way, only the law steps in if they take to hitting their children. Brutality can't develop good qualities. It was in spite of, rather than because of his father, that Frederick became what he was."

But the Princess and Prince Joachim, who were listening with interest to the conversation, joined with the governor in a chorus of protest.

"Oh no, nothing of the kind. Every one says it was because his father was so stern, so strict with him, that he became such a clever man. It made him a splendid soldier. You see, his father made him drill and do everything he didn't like, that's why he turned out so well—every one sees it. Even your Carlyle saw it —he wrote a book about it. All the beatings and things that seem so cruel were really the best that could have happened, they knocked all the silly French nonsense out of him."

"Oh, indeed! Did they? Then why did he all his life talk French, and read French books, and admire French architecture? Why did he despise German literature?"

The governor smiled, and sorrowfully admitted that Frederick's French tastes were unfortunately undeniable, and had survived the heavy-handed father's battering; he consoled himself, however, with the thought of his vindictive quarrel with Voltaire, and we glided by imperceptible degrees to other less controversial subjects. I had occasion later on to find the governor's view

of this choleric historical personage shared by most of his countrymen and women. The German *Ober-Gouvernante* of the Princess was astonished that anyone could doubt the extreme value, in developing a sturdy and patient efficiency, of the corporal punishment he distributed with such lavish impartiality, and the various tutors and visiting teachers who came to the Palace were of the same mind. When I, wondering if this sameness of opinion might be just an effect of the Court atmosphere, which would not permit anyone to entertain the idea that a king, especially a Hohenzollern king, can do wrong, pursued my researches farther into the remoter circles of society outside the Court, I found no difference. They all accepted the self-evident fact that Frederick had when young been beaten, starved, imprisoned, threatened with death, that he had become docile and submissive as a whipped dog, and that he had emerged into a military genius, therefore the beating, starvation, imprisonment, etc., must have been very good for him, and might—but for the less robust age in which we live—be employed with equally good results in the present day.

It was not till I had been living some years in Germany that I at last found—in a railway-carriage—the German for whom I had so long been looking—one who had not accepted the theory that Frederick the Great's character had been created by his father's ill-treatment; but she—it was a lady, a most delightful fellow-traveller whose name I never knew—was the only person I ever

met in the Fatherland whose ideas on the subject coincided with mine, and I am glad to think, in view of all that has happened since then, that she was more emphatic against brutality and harsh treatment of people in general than I—walking delicately in a foreign country and afraid to handle national prejudices too roughly—had ever dared to be.

The German officer is naturally very much in evidence at Potsdam. He may be met riding in the woods outside; he pervades the street in his brilliant uniform; he drives his smart dog-cart of afternoons in the outskirts. If he happens to ride by in the full-dress uniform of the Prussian Life-Guards, crowned by the dazzling helmet upon which is perched the Prussian eagle with outstretched wings and menacing beak, looking as though ready on the slightest provocation to fly in anyone's face, those who see him feel that they have looked on the embodied spirit of German militarism. He looks arrogant, of course. It is his duty when in uniform to create an atmosphere of arrogance, to browbeat and terrorize with a look anyone who crosses his path. A Prussian soldier is taught to feel and to look truculent as long as he is in uniform, and he often carries the characteristic with him into private life, although with the laying aside of his uniform he is divested of his chief inspiration and stimulus. A man has a different soul when he wears civilian clothes, and—an almost invariable rule in Germany—he also loses terribly in personal appearance.

I remember a young lieutenant of Reserve who had certain duties to perform in connexion with the household of the Emperor. He was never seen out of the uniform which belonged to his office, and had appeared to be a slender, but well-made, good-looking young man. Then one unlucky day, when the Court was in residence at Wilhelmshöhe, he was invited to luncheon at the Royal table, and the mysterious etiquette governing Court functions decreed that he must appear in ordinary civilian morning dress. He was so changed that he was with difficulty recognizable. It may have been partly the fault of his civilian tailor, who, unlike the military one, had not grasped the overwhelming truth that "where Nature fails then Art steps in," but the officer stood revealed as possessing in an acute degree what are called "bottle shoulders" and an otherwise miserable and insignificant physique. He wore a painful, apologetic smile, and seemed fully conscious of his own deficiencies.

"How I hate to be out of uniform!" he complained. "I can't feel at home in anything else. I shan't be happy till I get back into my good grey tunic. One feels such a worm in *Civil*."

"He looks a worm," murmured one of the ladies of the Court,—"with shoulders like that, anyone would. He ought to do Müller's exercises every day."

There was an old *Sattel-Meister* who often rode with the ladies, a handsome old man, not unsuspected of adventitious aids to beauty such as may be afforded by

hair-dye. Many German officers, both commissioned and non-commissioned, resort to such help, not so much inspired by personal vanity as by the fact that an appearance of age is always detrimental to an officer's prospects of advancement in his career. Baldness is not of so much consequence, because the majority of officers of the regular army are bald before they are thirty—a result, it is supposed, of the constant wearing of the ill-ventilated *Pickel-Haube* and other types of helmet.

The *Sattel-Meister*—equivalent in rank to a serjeant of cavalry—was an interesting old man, whose function was to supervise the training of the horses of the Empress, to attend Her Majesty when out riding, and also to accompany those ladies of the Court who liked to ride for their own amusement. He and I had many canters together in the pleasant Wildpark or in the forest, and over the big cavalry *Exerzier-Platz.* He was a man prodigal of his conversation, which was of inestimable benefit to the somewhat elementary German with which I started my career at Court. He was also very intelligent, with a great respect for the English, and we discussed together many interesting matters. Among other things he, to my surprise, spoke bitterly against a proposed increase of the German Army which was then being discussed in the Reichstag.

"We already have too many soldiers," he said, with his face darkening; "what do we want with more? It will only make trouble with other countries. It is an unnecessary burden on the people. And those who

have to pay the piper may not call the tune. Too many soldiers is worse than too few — they become our masters."

This from a man who had fought in the Franco-Prussian War and been practically all his life a soldier astonished me considerably.

"But," I laughed, "I thought that here in Germany every one was so devoted to the army, so proud of it, and so ready to pay the piper—all, of course, excepting the Socialists."

"The Socialists?" he growled. "The Socialists are quite right—the people are getting tired of paying for the army. It is dangerous in many ways. Military service is all right,—it is good to give a year to one's country,—but we are going too far—too far——"

We were passing those funny targets—in the shape of men—at which the soldiers of the garrison had been practising shooting, and commenting on the appearance of these wooden figures, I, in a bantering mood, suggested to him that in the minds of the soldiers they represented Englishmen.

But the old *Sattel-Meister* strenuously resented the idea.

"*Gott bewahre!*" he ejaculated piously. "What have Germans and Englishmen to fight over?"

"Why, nothing at all," I answered.

"*Natürlich*—nothing!" repeated the *Sattel-Meister*; "but then there are politicians,—there is *Welt Politik* and *Wasser Politik*,"—I think he was referring to the

German Navy and the "Future on the Water,"—" and politicians are like the Almighty, they can create something out of nothing. The German people don't want to fight, and I don't suppose the English people do either, but if the politicians happen to be the *dummer Kerls*—stupid fellows—they often are, then there will be trouble, and the people will pay."

He paused a minute, and our horses jogged on down the shady lane beneath the acacia-trees, whose beautiful pendent white blossoms scented the air with their lovely warm perfume.

"Elsass-Löthringen!" he ejaculated, as though overcome by some bitter memories. "We took it from the people, we drove many of them from their homes, and what good is it to us now? A constant danger! Are the people there happy and contented? No. When I go to Urville with the Empress, there is a tea for the children round the Schloss, and they put in the 'Tägliche Rundschau' a paragraph describing it and the happiness and content of the people—under German rule. It is all *Quatsch*. They are not happy and contented. And when the children grow up, they are more bitter than their parents. Tea at the Schloss! You can't make a conquered people content by giving them *Pfeffer-Kuchen* and coffee."

I agreed that more than this was needed.

Sometimes the *Sattel-Meister* appeared in grim and gloomy mood, and I then usually discovered that he had had difficulties with one of the *Stall-Meisters*, Junior

Masters of the Horse they may be called—the officials who were in authority and responsible for the working of the stables. On such occasions, if I waited a little while and gave the *Sattel-Meister* time to conquer his vexation, I usually found myself the recipient of various confidences and opinions with regard to these young men; who, it must be admitted from my own experience of them, were sometimes extraordinarily irritating in their love of showy authority, and very jealous of the supposed influence and consequent advantage that an old official of long and faithful service might be presumed to possess. The *Sattel-Meister* had lived and served in other times, under old officers of a different type from the modern young German, and perhaps it was inevitable that he should draw comparisons unflattering to the younger generation.

When at last the old *Sattel-Meister*, who was long past the age when he might legitimately apply for a pension, decided to retire from service and so escape the eternal pin-pricks of the young officers above him whom he most cordially detested, I naturally wished to present him with a small souvenir of the pleasant rides which we had had together, and going to the stables for the purpose passed on the way, just a few yards from the stable-door, a figure in plain clothes which reminded me vaguely of the rather untidy *Wirt* of some country inn—an impression of baggy, ill-fitting trousers, of a garish tie, of a hat that belonged not to the wearer but to some one else.

A few paces farther on, meeting a groom, I inquired for the *Herr Sattel-Meister*, and was told that I had just passed him, and turning round, discovered him in the man of the ill-fitting suit, looking hopelessly vulgarized and common, all the smartness and air of self-approval totally vanished. No wonder the German clings, in season and out of season, to his uniform. He is well advised to do so. Even the Emperor himself loses much of his fine appearance when he wears mufti.

The sons of the Kaiser upon reaching military age always had a young officer assigned to their service as adjutant, who also fulfilled the duties of a gentleman-in-waiting and general companion.

They were for the most part very agreeable, well-bred young men. Of one of them, Count Fink von Finkenstein, I have very agreeable recollections. He was the friend and companion of Prince Oskar of Prussia, was short, slim and light-haired, and talked with an amusing and attractive lisp. He was very game and plucky, fond of sport, full of unconscious humour and good nature. His tales of the adventures of the Prince and himself when at manœuvres they were *ein-quartiert* with the pastor of the village, and his descriptions of the agonized efforts of the *Pastor-frau* and her daughters to rise to the heights of what those simple souls imagined to be Court etiquette, used to send the Princess into fits of laughter.

Here may fittingly be interpolated the fact that the *Ein-quartierung* of the officers of the army frequently

leads to gratifying matrimonial results, and is a means of ensuring that maidens living in out-of-the-way portions of the empire may have an opportunity of meeting the young lieutenants of their dreams. Not but what the marriages of lieutenants are hedged about with many restrictions, of which more anon.

Another adjutant of one of the Princes was young Lieutenant von Mackensen, son of the Colonel of the Danzig Death's-Head Hussars, who, as General von Mackensen, later was appointed to command the German army sent against the Russians in the East. Young Mackensen was stalwart and handsome, exactly like his father, and they both showed in their features the traces of their Scottish ancestry, being descendants of a certain Mackenzie who many years ago settled in West Prussia.

Officers old and young came to the Royal table, and made on the whole a pleasant impression, especially those who had been abroad and rubbed off some of their angles against those of other nations. Of one I have a particularly vivid recollection, though I have forgotten his name; but he had lately been in China, had experienced British hospitality in many places abroad, and was an enthusiast for England and English ways. I had, after several years' residence at Court, been obliged to recognize that there was a certain veiled dislike of England in the atmosphere, a subtle resentment coupled with a good deal of contempt, which was always more marked, I noticed, in those men who knew least about the British Empire. But this officer was of that kindly,

tolerant, unprejudiced mind which is so rare and so delightful. He had insight and understanding, and his thoughts did not run in predestined grooves. We laughed together over English weaknesses, and he laid an appreciative finger on some of the sources of England's strength. He was sympathetic to our attitude of mind, and his criticisms were as kindly as they were convincing. He had that judicial faculty of mind which seems rather rare in Germany, where each person conceives it a sacred duty to put on the blinkers of a somewhat narrow patriotism which scarcely admits the right of other nations to have any patriotism of their own. But he was a notable exception. Most of the other officers with whom I discussed England and English ways seemed always biased by prepossessions and often by quite wrong ideas. They appeared to judge England by a standard that might have suited her fifty years ago. I was constantly puzzled at their assertions, which seemed so hopelessly out of date. The English Sunday was a stock subject for their animadversions, and some of them described to me weird experiences in London lodgings which they appeared to think represented the normal English existence. I had great difficulty in making some of them understand that the stage-coaches described in Dickens played a different part in the national life to those for example driven by the late Mr. Vanderbilt from London to Brighton. They most of them seemed incapable of understanding an interest in coaching for its own sake. They wanted to know

what was the use of coaching—of what benefit to the individual or State?

They struck one for the most part, in spite of their intellectuality, as having the cramped vision of men of narrow means and narrow experiences. They seemed also to have somewhat the same kind of unworthy jealousies, and to be envious of a people whom they held to be intrinsically inferior to themselves, but who by good luck had obtained a position which they did not deserve. This attitude of mind was not so easily discoverable among the higher commercial classes, whose business intercourse with the English perhaps taught them a more just appreciation of our faults and virtues. Among these latter, too, prevailed a more thoughtful and cultured cast of mind, inspired by broader views and finer, keener insight.

The mind of the officer seems to develop in one direction only, to be obsessed by one desire, and as he associates chiefly with officers, as he occupies the chief social rank in the empire regardless of his possible lack of genuine social qualifications, he is apt to be blind to his own limitations and to be conscious of a superiority which he really does not possess. He is by the laws and customs of the land so absolutely above and beyond criticism that he is apt to believe that there is nothing in him to criticize.

Yet it was a former German officer, an ardent admirer of the German Emperor and the German Army, who in the year 1904 ventured to write a book pointing

out some of its gravest defects and the terrible lack of moral tone among its officers. He laid great stress upon the existence of much overt brutality and ill-treatment of soldiers, not only by the non-commissioned officers but also by ill-tempered, drunken young lieutenants, who cruelly abused their position of authority and the private soldier's helplessness in the matter of self-justification.

He pointed out the low level of mental and moral culture of many officers and their failure to estimate the civilian classes at their full worth, and he unflinchingly pointed out the German officer's weakest spot—a false and exaggerated sense of his own importance.

He also drew attention to the well-known fact that many of them, owing to the smallness of their pay and the increasing luxury of living, are often hopelessly in debt—giving rise to conditions which are morally debasing and often end in deplorable scandals.

None of the military abuses which he pointed out and ardently desired to see reformed have ever been denied by the Germans themselves, and though the book was of course "suppressed" by the Government, yet everybody in Germany read it. It is quite easy to obtain copies of "suppressed" books, and as a rule the suppression greatly stimulates the sale. I have in Berlin seen notices in booksellers' windows that all "forbidden" books might be obtained within on inquiry. If copies are exhibited in the window, they are liable to confiscation by the police.

In Germany young lieutenants are not allowed to marry without the permission of their Colonel, or they must leave the army, and permission is only given when the lieutenant's private income combined with that of his promised bride reaches a sum considerably higher than his pay, but even then rather narrow means on which to live. There was once an impecunious young officer who had the luck to meet a wealthy heiress, and they fell mutually in love. When he approached his Colonel to inform him of the engagement and at the same time obtain permission for his immediate marriage, his superior officer inquired anxiously as to the portion which the bride—whose name conveyed nothing to him, it being as common as Schmidt or Müller—could contribute towards the exchequer.

"*Ach! mein. Colonel,*" answered the young man boldly, "she has more money in a week than you and I get in a whole year." A statement which the Colonel subsequently found to be in no way exaggerated.

But all young officers are not so lucky, and frequently they are in desperate straits for money, and cannot find in an ordinary way the lady of their dreams—she who will be lovely, docile, and domestically inclined, while possessing the indispensable snug little fortune.

So since the demand naturally creates the supply, the profession of marriage-broker, both amateur and professional, is largely in evidence in Germany. The Sunday newspapers especially are full of naïve matri-

monial advertisements—the gentleman bringing social position, family, and "unblemished record," while the lady's chief qualification for matrimony must be the possession of at least £5000.

Even the Emperor himself does not disdain to assist impecunious but otherwise excellent officers in finding a rich bride, often overriding family objections with a certain Napoleonic arbitrariness; and one of his adjutants had to thank His Majesty for clearing away difficulties in the way of obtaining the lady of his choice, the daughter of very wealthy parents who had cherished other views for her future. The marriage, however, turned out very happily—chiefly, said ill-natured opponents of it, because the husband was always away from home travelling in the suite of the Emperor. But it is notorious that "arranged" marriages often do turn out perhaps a good deal more successfully than those inspired entirely by love.

One trait among German officers was the intense and enduring hatred, especially of the younger officers, towards France and Frenchmen generally. This dislike, instead of being extinguished with time, appeared to develop and increase, and the abuse constantly showered upon the French seemed hardly to be worthy of one great nation towards a gallant but unfortunate foe who, in 1870–1, had paid the bitter price of defeat and, one would have thought, might have been conciliated with immense advantage to Germany herself. But conciliation seems to find no foothold in German schemes of

statesmanship. They appear to consider it synonymous with weakness.

The Emperor in this respect is no better than his youngest, most pig-headed and least sagacious officer. He prefers the " mailed fist " rather than the iron hand under the silken glove. Soft words, perhaps, but hard deeds.

Once, on the occasion of unveiling a monument to the German and French soldiers who had fallen on the battle-field, the many German people who regretted the long estrangement from France made a great effort to express that regret, and conciliatory speeches were made, German and Frenchman stood side by side at the grave of their common dead who had perished together on the field of battle long ago, and there was hope of a changed feeling, of a mutual desire to bury national animosities, to no longer let the future be mortgaged to the memory of the past. The Emperor himself was present at the ceremony, and paid a fitting tribute to the valour of the men of both nations. It was not much, but it was a beginning, the germ it might have been, of something more generous and liberal in the German attitude, and many Germans among the civilian classes, those who had minds of sufficient independence of thought to abandon the stereotyped, narrowly patriotic view of things, were glad that at last there seemed a likelihood of the long-desired *rapprochement.*

" What have we not lost in all these years," remarked to me one lady, " by having to hold aloof from all that is

implied in French culture—by not being able to freely mix with the French people, so clever and original as they are? It has destroyed the proper balance of the German mind."

But the Emperor, alas! seemed to have no desire to assist, as he so easily might have done, at this attempt at reconciliation. It is true that he always treated French people whom he met with the greatest affability, and exercised upon them all the undeniable charm of character which he possesses; but he never permitted the German people to forget for a moment that France was the old hereditary enemy. Only a few days after returning from the above-mentioned unveiling of the monument to French and German warriors, he told at table an incident of the war which an old German officer had related to him, where some demoralized French soldiers had surrendered themselves to an inferior number of Germans—a not uncommon incident, I believe, in warfare, and one which the Germans themselves have also experienced. It was a quite unimportant occurrence, having no special bearing on any great event of the war. The Emperor, however, could not contain his delight at hearing the story, and declared his intention of commissioning one of the Court painters to make "the glorious achievement" the subject of an oil-painting which should then be hung in the mess-room of the regiment to whom, forty odd years before, these Frenchmen had surrendered.

None of the courtiers at the table seemed to be im-

pressed by the Emperor's idea. They obviously considered it vain and puerile, but he himself continued to talk gaily of the *Kerls* as he called the Frenchmen, describing their surrender with picturesque diction and an absolute certainty of detail, which somehow gave the impression, so vivid are the Emperor's descriptive powers, that he had himself been present on the occasion and seen the whole incident from start to finish.

CHAPTER VI

GERMAN EDUCATION

THE German parent, unlike the average English one, is anxious that his child should go willingly to school and work extremely hard while there. Both girls and boys possess a stimulus to exertion, a prize to be won quite apart from other academic prizes—the boys in their exemption, if they come up to the necessary educational standard, from more than one year of military service, while the girls are equally ambitious, from other but no less inspiring motives. In Germany, marriage has, so to speak, to be earned by the woman. On her falls the duty of furnishing and equipping the house—a custom which has many advantages. It is an encouragement to thrift and industry, for even the poorest maid-servant struggles to save, and nearly always does save, the thirty pounds which is reckoned the minimum sum upon which even the most modest household can be launched. Naturally, this sum increases in ratio to the social position occupied by the girl. If, for any reason, the marriage is afterwards dissolved—and divorce in Germany is granted for comparatively trivial causes, incompatibility of temper,

mutual antipathy, and in one instance that I know of the fact that the wife boxed the husband's ears (he was, it is true, an officer) are held to be sufficient grounds for allowing them to permanently separate—the household furniture naturally remains the property of the wife.

When I was living in the New Palace, an elderly woman who was servant there told me with a certain pleasure that her daughter, who had made an unfortunate marriage with a handsome but brutal man, who was selfish and cruel, and abominably ill-treated his wife and child, had taken the opportunity of the husband's absence to remove all the furniture from the flat where they had led a very unhappy life together in Berlin, and sent it to her mother in Potsdam, with whom in the future she had decided to make her home.

Thinking of the English law on such matters, I asked if there was not some danger that this step might get her daughter into trouble.

"Ach! no," she replied, quite surprised at the idea. "The furniture belongs to my daughter. She bought it all before she married—earned every penny of it. He's got nothing to do with it. It will be a great surprise for him—that brute!—a nice *Ueber-raschung*, won't it? But he deserves it all. She had to do it when he was away, or he would have beaten her. It was her only chance. But it's *her* furniture. She was years and years working hard for it. And then to marry such a *Kerl*, who can't keep his hands off her and the child!"

Once I stayed a few weeks in Plön, so as to give some English lessons to Prince Joachim of Prussia, who was a student there. My lodgings were in a big house in the village, which, excepting for my bedroom and a kitchen in the basement, was totally unfurnished. But one day the young lieutenant who held the position of governor to the Prince—not the same one I had known at the New Palace, but a comparative stranger—took me aside, and confiding to me the fact that in a month he hoped to be married, and was going to occupy two floors of the house where I lodged, asked if it would inconvenience me at all if the furniture was brought in, as his *Braut* had already bought it all, and how nice it would be if it could be sent in and unpacked at once.

Of course I was very pleased at the idea of having the echoing empty rooms furnished and made home-like, and in a few days' time enormous wooden packing-cases began to arrive, which the lieutenant and two or three soldier-servants spent all their spare time in opening on the bit of untidy grass-plot before the drawing-room windows, where a couple of long-legged, unpruned rose-bushes, in a vague and sketchy bed in the middle, waved incessantly to and fro, as though appealing for a stake to which to attach themselves. Front gardens in Germany are often rather neglected, and this was one of the most dishevelled I had ever seen, especially after the packing-cases had arrived and been wrenched open.

The furniture that emerged was very handsome and obviously rather costly, but what struck me most

about it was its massiveness and consequent unsuitability to the career of a young soldier, who in the natural course of events must be continually moving from place to place. The dining-room sideboard was monumental in size and ornamented with most elaborate and heavy carving, which would need the constant attention of a housemaid to keep it in proper condition. Then there were enormous plush sofas and arm-chairs, a dining-table of mediaeval appearance with plethoric legs which swelled out bulbously in the middle, and quantities of other furniture, including a grand piano, of such a weight and solidity that one wondered how the lieutenant and his soldiers had managed to drag them up the stairs to the first floor.

When everything was arranged—the heavy *portières* and plush curtains hung up by the upholsterer from Kiel, the carpet squares laid down in the middle of the painted floors, the pictures (landscapes in the drawing-room, engravings in the dining-room, all framed in black oak) suspended by the lieutenant himself from the hooks on the walls with much measuring and anxiety—the happy *Bräutigam*, full of pride in his handiwork, took me round to admire the effect. He had really arranged everything very well, and I was able genuinely to praise all that he had done and find it very good—which is what all lords of creation like. He told me that his *Braut* was the daughter of an architect and had therefore very superior taste, and when I asked him if he was not afraid of her lovely furniture being spoiled when he should have to

move from Plön, he only sighed and said that his *Braut* had chosen very solid furniture on that account, the constant moving being very injurious to goods of slighter quality.

It seemed to me an extremely judicious matrimonial partnership—that the young man should supply the larger share at least of the income to keep up the home, while the woman provided the home itself; and it certainly simplifies the matrimonial problem to a great extent, relieving the husband of the necessity of spending a large sum of money in furnishing at a time when he has other expenses of matrimony to face.

So that every girl in Germany, with the exception of those born of rich parents, has an intense desire for education. Very early in life is impressed upon her plastic mind the fact that by it alone will she be in a position to earn the necessary money for her *Aus-steuer*, and that even if her parents are able to give her a sum of money, yet the more she can assist them to save, the better will her chances in life be of obtaining a prize in the matrimonial market. And in Germany, as in England some fifty years back, the chief avenue of employment for women is teaching; for even nowadays German girls of good family would be horrified at the idea of going on the stage, training as gardeners, dairy-women, or agriculturists. A few have struck out for themselves as photographers, bookbinders, or clerks, and as of old, Art and Literature claim a good percentage; but the majority of German girls take the road of least

resistance and qualify as teachers, and make with certain limitations very excellent ones—so excellent that I was always surprised that they were not allowed a more prominent and authoritative position in educational affairs.

All German children at a very early age are inspired by a spirit of hard work. They must learn to rise early; for German schools open at seven o'clock in summer-time and eight in winter, finishing, excepting for special subjects, at one o'clock. In the brown or black canvas satchel with which every child is equipped, is placed every morning along with the books which have been used for home study, a substantial *Butter-Brödchen*, which is eaten at half-past ten in a half-hour's pause which is allowed for the purpose of rest and recreation.

As a rule, all German children attend day-schools or have a teacher at home. The boys for the most part, until they go to the University, remain with their parents in the intervals of learning. It is one of the drawbacks of German schools, that outside the knowledge which the pupils acquire—and no one has ever denied the thoroughness and intelligence with which learning is imparted in Germany—they have so little influence upon the inner life of the pupil. The teachers are often mere pedagogues, and the pupils receive from them no inspiration, if we except—and it is a great exception—that ardent cultivation of patriotism which, since the founding of the German Empire in 1871, has been one of the chief means of uniting and consolidating the various different

states of which it is formed. No country in the world possesses such a mass of patriotic songs and poetry as Germany. Many of them were born of times of terrible stress and struggle. There are the writings of the warrior-poet Körner, breathing the pure flame of self-sacrifice and love of country. He was a soldier of the *Freiheits-Krieg*, or War of Liberation, and died fighting against Napoleon. Hundreds of other poems and war-songs are learned by German school-children, not forgetting those of Walter von der Vogelweide, the most celebrated German poet of the Middle Ages, who outshone all his rivals at the great contest of Minnesingers at the Wartburg, and wrote a poem which is the prototype of "Deutschland über Alles," wherein he praises everything German, especially German women. Like later Germans, his poetry was largely inspired by politics, and his verse exercised a great influence on public feeling.

A fine war-hymn of three verses, wedded to simple if monotonous music, is one born also of the troubled times of the Napoleonic Wars. With its double rhythm and ponderous rolling harmonies, it stirs even in the breasts of strangers hearing it for the first time a marvellous thrill and enthusiasm:

"Wir treten zum Beten, vor Gott den Gerechten
Er haltet und waltet ein strenges Gerecht
Er lässt von den Schlechten, nicht die Guten Knechten,
Sein Name sei gelobt, er vergisst unser nicht."

Every child learns to sing it in school, it is taught in barracks to every soldier, it is heard at every church

parade, and in the Royal Chapel, accompanied by the shrill sound of trumpets, is invariably sung at the great anniversaries, such as the Emperor's birthday and *Ordensfest.* It has been heard on every battle-field since the Great War broke out.

I have often wished that in England we had some similar war-hymn in which we too might breathe out the soul of our national aspirations, something untouched by music-halls or the desire to make money—words and music which would crystallize the thoughts that stir and inspire us, and give them a worthy channel in which to find outlet and expression.

The handmaids of Patriotism in all ages have been Poetry and Song, and the Germans do not let them sit out in the cold with nothing to do. They know that the associations of childhood are the strongest and most lasting, that the emotions of a people are, in perilous times, one of its most valuable national assets, so they have not neglected to cultivate and make them fruitful. The poorest and the richest child in the empire is taught from the same book of verse its duty of work and self-sacrifice for the Fatherland. History, we know, is in no country taught to children quite as one might wish it to be, being too often used to foster a rather narrow and sentimental attachment to one's own country and its national character. Helene Lange, the great reformer of girls' education in Germany, who has continually, and often successfully, battled for woman's right to be educated widely and to keep her

education from being entirely controlled as formerly by men, has frequently pointed out the danger of this blind and antiquated method. She has earnestly pleaded that instead of concentrating attention only on dates and events, history should help pupils to understand the process and development of civilization, and the economic conditions which, rather than the wars of past ages, change the history of the world.

State girls' schools in Germany are all controlled by men, and only in comparatively recent years have women been allowed to take any active part in teaching the higher classes. It is an everyday sight in Berlin to see a long procession of little girls taking the air under the leadership of a be-spectacled young man, who will take them to the Sieges-Allée, and before the statues of former German rulers give them a short lecture on German history, on lines above mentioned. From the windows of my bedroom in Berlin Schloss, which overlooked the colossal statue of William the First, day after day I used to see streams of small children climbing the steps up to the broad pediment on which the statue was placed, and listen to the raucous voices of various young men who proclaimed the manifold virtues and achievements of the Old Emperor. Occasionally, if the classes were very large, a second female teacher accompanied him; but she never was allowed to give the lecture, or to do anything but hustle the children across the street, and see that they lined up in rank on the opposite side.

The Empress and many of the ladies of her Court have sympathized with the desire of women to have more complete control of the education of girls, but all the same the education of the only daughter of the Empress was, from the very beginning, entrusted to masculine minds. As soon as she could read, an old tutor of very moderate abilities was appointed to take in hand her education, and her German governess was supposed to interfere in it no further than to uphold the tutor's efforts on every occasion. Later on, the Princess had other tutors, all of a type very common in Germany—learned men of orderly minds full of interesting information, capable of acquiring knowledge of anything necessary within two or three days.

I remember once when the Princess, then aged about fourteen, was going to pay a private visit to Copenhagen. The day before she was to start, her tutor gave her a lecture on the Danish capital, at which I was present. He knew everything there was to know of that city, as though he had been living there for months, though as a matter of fact he had never set foot in it. He described its parks and gardens, every noteworthy statue or picture in its galleries, with an intimate knowledge that was simply astounding. He knew the local history, the local traditions; one almost breathed a Danish atmosphere and smelt the characteristic smells of the place. And in plain, simple, but extremely interesting and humorous style he told his story, which in the marvellous assimilative German way he had gathered

together in a few hours from various works on Denmark.

I had many opportunities of observing the German tutor as a type and of getting to know him fairly well. He always appeared to me, in spite of his undoubted qualifications, to be a somewhat unpleasant kind of person, possessing many rather despicable traits of character. I feel the less chary of saying this because I found my sentiments in this matter shared to a great extent by the Germans themselves. They all with one accord had great respect for the learning but little for the personal character of those various instructors of youth who came within my sphere of observation. They themselves described them to me as being weak in character, eager to curry favour, unrefined in their personal habits, and very easily *piquiert*. And my own personal experience corroborated what I heard. They were indeed, many of these learned *Professoren*, of a childishly uncontrolled and easily wounded vanity, quickly offended, susceptible to the grossest flattery, and anxious to impose themselves upon the world as superior beings. They had all that ridiculous pretentiousness which children so quickly perceive and despise.

I have one man in memory, of undoubted great ability as a teacher, who when he gave a lecture in history or geography to the Princess and the little girls who were her fellow-students and suspected the slightest inattention in his pupils, would stop suddenly, and like

Simon Tappertit, proceed to "eye over" the four demure little damsels who sat in a row before him, concentrating into his gaze what he no doubt believed to be a Bismarck-sternness calculated to make the stoutest maiden-heart quail. He at the same time maintained a dead silence for some moments, drawing himself up with a theatrically proud air, which, owing to his own personal disabilities, entirely failed of its intended effect, and waited in silence for his pupils to look shame-faced and penitent. The German school-girl, brought up from infancy to be docile and do what is expected of her, would as a rule respond to these tactics by outward signs of contrition, either genuine or assumed, some of a nervous disposition might even be moved to tears, upon which the teacher, placated and satisfied at these signs of his power, after a suitable admonition would proceed with his teaching.

The Princess and her fellow-schoolgirls for a time adhered to the orthodox attitude of penitence, though privately the former, who had lately made the acquaintance of an American girl and learned from her among other things the "cake-walk" and various flowers of American speech, thought that Herr Müller's "Bismarck-stunts," as she was pleased to call them, were rather ridiculous and misplaced, as indeed they were. Then one day Prince Oskar, at that time a student of Bonn University, being at home for a few days, thought well to give his young sister some advice. He was prodigal of counsel was Prince Oskar, but it was usually of a

very practical and sensible kind, and, unlike most advice, gratefully received and laid to heart by its recipient. The gist of Prince Oskar's admonition, as far as I could gather at second-hand from the Princess herself, was to the effect that a scholar must never allow herself to be unduly imposed upon by a teacher's apparent infallibility, nor accept his opinions of the intrinsic worth of his ideas at his own value; that she must on all matters preserve her own independent judgment, not allowing herself to be influenced by personal bias; and above all she must bear in mind that a great deal of what was taught in schools had no practical bearing on life, and a large proportion not only of Herr Müller's but other professors' instruction was mere "*Dummes Zeug*"—"silly rot." In this strain had Prince Oskar declaimed at large, with the effect that on the next occasion when the teacher tried to exercise the power of his glance over the Princess and her companions, he found his efforts ignored. The one "of mildest mood" among the pupils, she who usually on these occasions melted into a softened frame of mind bedewed by tears, having had her *morale* stiffened by the alternate jeers and encouragement of the Princess to whom she was passionately attached, on encountering the Professor's baleful gaze, remained quite unperturbed and cheerful, dropping with great presence of mind a pencil on the floor to cover any confusion she might feel, while the others were absorbed in their own thoughts and sat with smiling faces, feeling no doubt inward feminine tremors but

none the less battling bravely with their emotions. Two of them, including the Princess, after a few moments of silence, also dropped pencils and made a great business of picking them up again, dragging chairs over the floor, and crawling under the table. They remained most respectful and cheerful towards the enraged Professor, but from that time they ceased to fear him, and being on the whole a sensible man, he realized the fact and made no further attempts to *imponieren.*

The Augusta-Stift, the girls' school in Potsdam from among whose pupils were chosen the three companions of the Princess who shared her studies till the last year of her education, was one of the few boarding-schools to be found in Germany. Most of these aristocratic establishments are founded on the sites of ancient convents, and at the Reformation were converted to their present uses. The families which had given lands or other endowments had the right to send their daughters to be educated free of charge, and these girls, if they remained unmarried, were given a suite of rooms in the *Stift,* together with board and a small but sufficient yearly income. The head of the community still retained the title of *Abtissin,* or Abbess, and her robes of office approximated closely to the conventual garb, although, being a Protestant community, no one had to take any vows. As far as an outsider could gather of the life in these *Stifts,* especially of that of the schoolgirls educated there, it was of an old-fashioned, unprogressive type. Some *Stifts* were

so aristocratic that the candidate was not admitted if she could not show sixteen quarterings of nobility in her family tree.

Most of the girls were ordinary boarders, paying fees as in any other school. They wore uniform, and were allowed no responsibility of any kind, but expected to be passionately absorbed in their studies and in a religious life. They were hedged in by numberless small rules and penalties, rather reminding one of Miss Shepherd in "David Copperfield," who was "stood in the stocks for turning in her toes."

The Emperor had in his gift the nomination to vacancies in several of these *Stifts*, and one lady who had been employed in teaching the Princess was anything but pleased when she heard that through the instrumentality of the ladies of the Court and the unexpected death of a *Stifts-Dame* her future had been satisfactorily provided for.

Secured from financial anxiety she had only to accept the vacant place and live happily ever after, with a right to two roebucks yearly from the Royal forests and other ancient privileges, while she could be usefully employed in adding to her slender income by instructing the young ladies belonging to the school attached to the *Stift*. But she recoiled in horror at the prospect,—she was barely thirty,—and for some time I was in the embarrassing position of being called upon to sympathize with her desire not to retire from the world of Berlin into premature obscurity—most *Stifts* are situated in

remote, picturesque, but inaccessible places—and yet to show a becoming appreciation of the noble part played by the ladies of the Court in arranging for her, at some pains to themselves, such a secure and comfortable provision. Being a person of modern tendencies and certain maybe quixotic enthusiasms, she was not in the least grateful for the dull, monotonous prospect before her, and it was only after much misapprehension and some very tactful handling of a rather difficult situation that she was able to explain at last her desire to postpone for a season her withdrawal from the life of the capital.

The Augusta-Stift, where eighty young maidens of the bluest blood in Germany were educated, was a fine building, recently rebuilt in a very effective modern style, with wide, airy classrooms and corridors. It possessed a good gymnasium and a chapel, and was considered wonderfully up to date because the girls played not only tennis but cricket, which they learned from an English teacher. It stood in a pleasant tree-shaded corner of Potsdam, not far from one of the lakes, and was under the special patronage of the Empress, who visited it frequently and took a very warm interest in all the pupils.

The only boarding-schools for boys, something akin to our public schools but run on very different lines, were the *Kadetten-Schulen*—cadet schools—where boys were educated under semi-military training. Once I was allowed, when staying in Plön, to visit the cadet school there and to be present while a young officer

in uniform gave an English lesson. He had spent a year in England and could speak fairly fluently, but with a very bad accent. The whole lesson was given in English. First of all the boys—there were about thirty in the class—read aloud a few sentences and the teacher asked them questions upon them. Their replies were fluent and grammatical, but reflected their teacher's bad pronunciation. Everywhere in Germany I noticed that girls almost invariably spoke much better English than boys, because they learned it from an English teacher, while the boys had to be content with a German. In the cadet schools the pupils wear a school uniform of a military type, and have to stand at attention whenever a master speaks to them. They play tennis on an asphalt court, but do not appear to go in for any other kind of sport, though they do a little boating in the summer months.

I was also permitted to see over the Victoria-Louisen-Schule, a secondary school for girls at Charlottenburg, one of the finest and most modern in Berlin, with an attendance of over one thousand scholars. It was built "regardless of expense," and possessed all that one could desire in a school—ample space, light, and air. The classes were in full swing, and I visited them in turn, beginning with the lower ones. Some of the younger children were having a French lesson. Under the supervision of a teacher they were laying a table with doll's tea-things, and as they spread the cloth and placed each piece of crockery on the table they described

in French every successive action as they performed it. This association of word and deed appeared to me an admirable and practical method of teaching languages.

Upstairs, another class of older girls of fifteen and sixteen were having a lesson in English. Their teacher—a woman—spoke our language admirably, with very little foreign accent. She was giving a difficult lesson on English literature, and never seemed to hesitate for a word or to be at fault for want of an expression.

In the upper corridor of the school were hung some very fine reproductions of modern art and excellent coloured engravings. The head of the school—of course a man—told me that they laid great stress on the proper artistic training of children by giving them excellent models to look at. He showed me with pride his lecture-room equipped with screen, lantern, and thousands of mounted specimens. Then he took me into a singing class, where he told me the young master had just become engaged to one of his pupils—a girl of seventeen.

On the whole, excepting in the matter of languages, I could not discover any marked superiority in German teaching-methods to those in our best English schools of similar type. There are, of course, many private schools, but as they are all visited by Government inspectors in the same way as the State schools the standard is kept high, and I learned that on the whole the heads of private schools rather welcome inspection than otherwise. Far from being a drawback, it is looked

WILLIAM II, WAITING IN POTSDAM WITH HIS DAUGHTER AND SUITE, FOR THE ARRIVAL FROM BERLIN OF THE FIRST "PARSEVAL" AIRSHIP, WHICH, HOWEVER, MEETING WITH AN ACCIDENT *EN ROUTE*, FAILED TO ARRIVE, BEING PRACTICALLY WRECKED ON THE WAY

upon as a distinct advantage, as the inspector's attitude is more that of a sympathizing counsellor than of a harsh critic. He welcomes originality of method as long as it leads to good results, and if he comes across any useful innovation in one school, after it has been tested for some months and found to be on the side of progress and improvement, he will spread abroad its advantages in other schools. To the timid, nervous teacher he is naturally something of a nightmare; but the best inspectors—they are naturally not all on the same level—will give many valuable hints to a teacher, and if he is a tactful man—which he very often, alas! is not—will be a great stimulus and encouragement to novel methods.

Even children educated at home under a governess or tutor are not exempt from inspection, and those of Royalty no less so. While the children of the German Emperor were being educated at home, twice a year appeared the inspector to assure himself of their proper progress; and when the Princess remained alone, she with her three friends still continued to be inspected at intervals, and it was amusing to hear of the inward tremors and heart-sinkings of the Emperor's daughter when she knew such a visit was imminent, and her extreme joy when it was over and she felt that she had acquitted herself well.

But, after all, the main reason of the success of the excellent German educational system would seem to lie chiefly in the fact of the enthusiasm of the nation itself for education. Parents are keen to see their

children love learning,—not perhaps from entirely disinterested motives, but from a knowledge of its power,—and they are of course anxious for their sons to escape with one year's military service instead of two. In a middle-class family it is considered a terrible disgrace for a boy not to get his "remove," and the lamentable suicides of boys so frequently to be read of in German newspapers can always be traced to some sensitive child's inability to be *versetzt*. I remember a delightful youth, Siegfried by name, one of those who, if he had been born in England, would have been distinguished in games and athletics, and might perhaps later on have made a successful colonist. He was so charming and good-tempered that Prince Joachim was greatly attracted to him, and as they were about the same age it was arranged that Siegfried should share the Prince's studies and afterwards accompany him to Plön. Now, German tutors are very abusive—there is no other term for it—to pupils who do not come up to the recognized standard of proficiency, and poor Siegfried was hopelessly below it. He possessed no memory for facts, his mind was unable to grapple with the intricacies of Latin grammar, and in mathematics he was a hopeless failure. Sunday after Sunday the hapless boy had to spend his scanty leisure in working, and at last, as his example had not the desired stimulating influence on Prince Joachim, he was sent away in the deepest disgrace, as though he had done something criminal. The Empress was very much attached to the boy, who she perceived was an excellent

manly companion for her own son, whose health had been very delicate, keeping him from the usual sports of boyhood; but although she pleaded for a longer trial, neither tutor nor governor would hear of it, and the boy himself was glad to go. He was sent to school, where in three months he developed brain fever, and after lying dangerously ill for some time recovered, but was forbidden by the doctor to do anything in the way of study for over a year and then only for a very short time daily.

The parents were very much depressed at their son's failure, and when I suggested the colonies as a sphere for Siegfried's undoubted capacities they seemed still more depressed.

As a matter of fact I never heard of any German who wanted to settle in German colonies.

The brother of a German girl I knew, another failure, more from want of character than lack of mental ability, proposed to go abroad and "try his luck." As he had been accustomed to farming, I was surprised to hear from his sister that he intended to go to America.

"But why not to your own colonies? I hear they are so splendid and flourishing. Why doesn't he go to South-West Africa?" I asked. It was at the time when Dernburg was Minister for the Colonies and had inspired great enthusiasm for the splendid possibilities of German colonization.

She looked a little nonplussed, and made a grimace.

"Oh, nobody goes to German colonies. They are

managed by the Government. Germans who go to America do best."

We all know that German agriculturists emigrating to Canada or the States are invariably very industrious and successful people. They appear to be largely recruited from the educational " failures " of Germany.

CHAPTER VII

GERMAN WOMANHOOD

IN Germany, as I have already said, girls without money have far less chance of achieving matrimony than in England, where the husband is expected to provide for his wife; so the modern German girl, conscious of being greatly in excess of the male population, seeks to extend her sphere of activities, and is no longer content to be merely a good *Haus-frau* and to learn seventeen different ways of making sausages. It is true that girls brought up on estates in the country may still have to superintend the rites attendant on the yearly pig-killing, and I remember one of the ladies of the Court, a young countess belonging to an old and honoured German family, congratulating herself on becoming engaged to a naval officer because she would not, as might have been the case if she had married a landed proprietor, be required to supervise various household tasks, such as the smoking of goose-breasts, hams and bacon, the making of various kinds of those large and succulent sausages above-mentioned, pickling of tongues and *Schweine-fleisch*, preparation of *Apfel* and *Pflaumen-mus*, and multifarious other tasks, of which

she confessed herself completely ignorant, yet was prepared, in case of necessity, to acquire the art and unflinchingly perform. I made further inquiries from a girl, born and bred in a remote district of Pomerania, as to the actual work which the mistress of a German country-house was expected to do.

"Do you actually find it necessary to cut up sausage-meat?" I asked. "I always thought that German servants were so excellent—prepared to do anything, and to work so much harder than ours in England."

"Yes, they do," was the answer; "but of course they need supervision, and my mother and I weigh out all the sausage-meat for them, and have to be there all the time to see that they do it properly. We don't actually cut up the sausage-meat, but we do the mixing—you know it has to be mixed in various ways. There's *Leber-Wurst* and *Blut-Wurst*——" Here I shuddered, and was only saved from condemning German methods on recollecting how our own English "black-puddings" are made.

The mother of this girl was a refined, cultivated woman, who spoke excellent English and French, and retained a delightful, old-fashioned, kindly outlook on the world and its affairs. The charming and intellectual wife of a learned Professor I knew, a great art-critic and writer, would often tell me that she had been busy helping her two maids to hang out the washing or make the bedrooms tidy; but I noticed that her daughters—she had four—were supremely ignorant of everything pertaining to

household matters, in which they were not in the least interested, being absorbed in various branches of study and very anxious to make careers for themselves. The German "daughter" of to-day is no longer brought up on the same lines as her mother. Everywhere I was told that household management was becoming a thing of the past, that restaurants and a love of leisure were undermining all the good old German ways, that girls preferred to train as doctors or dentists or even chemists, that they wanted to be factory-inspectors rather than cooks and domestic purveyors of home-comforts.

The German ideal of woman is, as we know, of a being who entwines heavenly roses in the earthly lives of her mankind, and exercises a softening but strictly subordinate rôle in his existence. Her one desire should be, not a misguided longing for knowledge and culture, or a broadening of the sphere of her activities, but devotion and self-sacrifice for the sake of her husband and children; and as a rule the German woman, when she is married, is content to fill the rôle assigned her, and, like women of many other nations, find her happiness in the limited sphere of home. It is quite likely that in that case she will, if living in an out-of-the-way spot, undertake a great part of her children's education. I remember finding one such mother, a very pretty, alert young woman married to a rather uninteresting husband, whose home was away in the big forests in East Prussia on the Russian frontier. She had taught her little boys

to speak and read English, and when I met her she had just introduced into their household an English governess who was to carry on the work the mother had begun. Talking of English governesses in German households, I was often surprised to find what very ignorant young women were filling these posts—girls whose grammar and pronunciation were faulty, and knowledge of English history and literature almost non-existent.

"English governesses are so frightfully ignorant," said a clever German woman to me one day. "They haven't an idea when the Wars of the Roses happened, or who Simon de Montfort was, and as for knowing anything about Frederick the Great and Queen Louise——"

I tried to excuse the ignorance of English governesses by pointing out to her that many English girls, with very little knowledge excepting of their own language, came to Germany with the fond belief that they would immediately be taken into a wealthy family, paid a high salary, and treated as a dear and intimate friend. The more ignorant and unsophisticated, the more ready were they to believe that the Germans would welcome them with open arms, and the Germans on their side often showed little discrimination and appeared to think that any Englishwoman was good enough to teach her own language, especially as they were prepared to pay the smallest possible salary and put her to sleep in a room which in England we should call a cupboard. The

better-educated English college girl rarely comes to Germany to teach, unlike the German girl of noble birth who is only too delighted to spend a year or two in England enjoying a salary which she could never hope for in her native land, beside the added prestige which all teachers gain who have resided in a foreign country.

In the German secondary schools every teacher of languages must have lived for at least a year in the country whose tongue she teaches and be able to converse fluently in English or French. Languages in Germany are taught to girls primarily with the idea that they shall be able to talk in them, not, as in England, with a view to passing a complicated written examination, wherein, as one victim plaintively remarked, "one learns a lot of rot about the proper employment of the subjunctive and can't ask a French taxi-driver how much his fare is to Longchamps—or if you do manage it, then his answer is quite incomprehensible. Languages were meant to be talked before they were written. I can spell in French beautifully, but cabmen and porters are so silly, they won't stop and spell the words for us —I wish they would, then I should be all right."

The daughter of the *Kastellan*, or caretaker, of the portion of Berlin Schloss in which I lived in the winter-time when the Court was at Berlin always spoke to me in English when we met on the stairs. She had learned it in a secondary school and her accent was excellent.

A trait which has struck every one who has had much

to do with Germans is the keenness with which they take every opportunity of practising foreign languages. An English girl living in a German family will often find it very difficult to learn any German at all, so eager is every member to talk English with her. But German tutors and schoolmasters and the majority of the young German officers I met could speak no English at all, and usually apologized for the fact by saying that they knew French; but I noticed that when the opportunity of talking French arose they were equally incapable of speaking it. It was obvious that languages were less well taught in boys' schools. And, as a matter of fact, one soon perceived that in Germany women-teachers were recruited from a higher social class than the corresponding men-teachers; were better bred, possessed of finer, more tactful feelings, had assimilated more of the true inward spirit of culture, and consequently, on the whole, were of broader, more tolerant views. I never have been able to understand the preference, so marked in Germany, for the man-teacher over the woman-teacher, for those women-teachers I had the privilege of knowing were pre-eminently well trained and well equipped for the work they had to do, and very sympathetic and tactful in handling their pupils, an absolute contrast to the German *Fräulein* of our childhood's days.

I suppose English teachers in Germany are liable to rather acute criticism, because a few years ago I received a book from a young German author, in which the chief

characteristic of the English governess of the family in the story was a perpetual questioning of the children, at the most inopportune moments, as to whether they had attended properly to the details of their toilet. What made this trait the more painful was the fact that the hero of the tale—a boy of nine or ten—was of a dreamy, poetic temperament, and when he was immersed in a tender *reverie* (German boys, it appears, are frequently of this type), his mental vision fixed on the glittering of sunshine in the pine-trees, and the dimple of the waters of the lake beyond, a harsh voice would break into his daydream, asking, "Did you remember to brush your teeth this morning, Hermann?" and his picture for the time being was rudely shattered.

The German women that one meets in the street among the ponderous crowds that move with slow, sauntering deliberation up and down the Linden on Sundays, hoping for a glimpse of their beloved Kaiser, strike one as being all much of the same type—rather heavy in feature, fleshy in substance, and ill-dressed. Their children are clad in tartan-patterned materials of ugly design, and the mothers themselves seem as though with matrimony they had for ever cast aside any attempt to preserve their appearance. They are dressed neatly,—one rarely sees an untidy German woman,—but with no obvious desire to look their best; and they cling desperately to the same fashions for years. If you want to see smartly-dressed German women, you will find them at the races; but as a rule they do not trouble

themselves much about style and cut. The Empress, like our own Queen Mary, is conservative in her tastes; and though the young married Princesses, especially the Crown Princess, are very anxious to be up to date in style, any extreme is frowned upon at Court, where certain rules are laid down which may not be infringed. On my last visit to Germany, at the time of the wedding of the Emperor's daughter in May 1913, everybody at Court was wearing their hair in the fashion of four years before, combed straight up off the forehead and rolled over a wire frame, which we in England had discarded some time.

German women of the poorer classes in the country do an enormous amount of agricultural work. Not only in the remoter districts of East and West Prussia may they be seen toiling in the fields by hundreds, but also in the outskirts of Berlin and Potsdam, where they do the greater part of the field-work. The soil in Northern Germany is excessively light and sandy, and enormous crops of potatoes are grown, which are planted and tended almost entirely by women, though men do the ploughing and preliminary cultivation of the land. They are paid somewhere about the rate of threepence or fourpence a day, are clothed in neat if faded print dresses, and to keep off the sun each one wears a bright handkerchief bound round the head. Going and coming from work, they wear knitted stockings and wooden shoes, but prefer to be barefoot in the fields. Excepting for the smallness of their pay, they seem to need little

pity; for the work is not hard, they are out in the fresh air and sunshine among the trees, they chatter incessantly as they hoe and dig, and appear to take things in a leisurely way. Standing all day at the wash-tub cannot be half such pleasant work, though it is probably better paid. The women who used to come with the coal-carts to the New Palace, helping to unload them, seemed altogether in another category. They were of a more dirty, degraded type, and one felt sorry for them when the rain came down and the wind tore at the scanty grey locks that escaped from the red handkerchiefs they wore tied tightly round their heads. They had a crushed, brutalized appearance, and were never seen to smile like the potato-women did. They gazed with a look of sour disapproval and dislike at the consequential footmen passing to and fro in the *Hof*, and appeared somewhat akin to the lean, puny, over-worked horses that drew the carts—women without hope of enjoyment in life.

In the gardens of the Palace scores of women were employed to weed and brush the paths, especially in the autumn when the leaves were falling. They dragged a little hand-cart about with them, into which they loaded the dead leaves and blown-off branches. They worked in bands, sweeping methodically, eight or ten together, leaving the marks of their long thin besoms on the sand of which all the garden-walks of the Palace were made, as gravel is very scarce in the neighbourhood, while the sand is cheap and soon dries, is easily raked over once a day, and close at hand, being indeed the chief con-

stituent of the soil of the Mark Brandenburg, which has been called "the sand-box of Europe." Women also were employed all through the winter to carry fuel into the different apartments of the Palace. They too had on their heads the usual picturesque practical peasant head-dress, the bright cotton handkerchief so universally worn on the Continent, and they padded up and down the staircases in their soft felt shoes, carrying on their backs enormous deep baskets fitted with straps over the shoulders, and filled with the short pine-logs which were burnt in all the cheery big open fireplaces or the chocolate or white porcelain stoves which rise monumentally in the corner of every German apartment.

One German lady, who had lived for years in the Royal Schloss in Berlin, once had her closed white porcelain stove, a beautiful erection rising right up to the ceiling and ornamented with delightful little fat porcelain Cupids, converted by the zealous official who has charge of that department into an open fireplace, so that she might enjoy the cheery blaze of the logs. As her room was, however, also heated by hot-water pipes, the white stove was rarely needed, but on certain occasions when visitors, especially English visitors, came to spend the evening she would light the fire for their delectation and her own, for she confessed to a fondness for our English fireplaces; but, unfortunately, she always had to sit up until the fire had gone completely out, as she refused to go to bed with the little trap-door leading into the chimney left open all night, for, she declared, she

would *frieren*—be frozen—in the morning. Ventilation via the chimney does not commend itself to German ideas, though many Germans who have lived for some time in England, and visited at houses with modern well-grates, have adopted them largely, and one celebrated Berlin architect has his beautiful house in the Grunewald fitted throughout with English grates; "but," he adds smilingly, "I have German *Central-Heizung* as well. English fires for æsthetic effect, for poetry, for glamour and romance, but German hot-water pipes for solid comfort." German drawing-rooms are as a rule, even in the houses of cultivated people, rather dismal apartments, owing to the national fondness for chocolate colour with which the floors and walls are often painted. There is a great look of time-defying solidity too about the furniture which is often in imitation walnut, and it is not to be wondered at that the Germans themselves are rather repelled by the atmosphere they have themselves created in this room, calling it by the name of *die Kalte Pracht*—the cold splendour. In Potsdam the "best parlour" look and tastelessness of the drawing-rooms of the wives of the Emperor's adjutants were simply appalling. I have a vivid recollection of one of these rooms, belonging to a very delightful but hopelessly unæsthetic woman who was a great favourite at Court, where her volubility and good humour helped to dissipate some of the heavy atmosphere which hangs inevitably over palaces. When I called on her in her flat in Potsdam she received me in a drawing-room which was

a positive nightmare of crude colouring and tasteless furnishing. An uneasy hard sofa, two equally repellent so-called easy-chairs, and six uncompromising straight-backed ordinary chairs had been recently re-covered in an expensive plush brocade of aggressive mustard yellow and green, and the smiling hostess challenged my admiration of these frightful objects with the easy confidence of one who is sure of her own taste. It was the first genuine German drawing-room into which I had penetrated, but later on I discovered that it was by no means the worst of its species. There were others of unrelieved drab dullness, stuffy in the extreme and exhibiting depressing pictures of deceased great-aunts and uncles in plush frames. Green plush tablecloths, with a small hand-worked square of lace in the middle, on which was placed a lamp in winter (lamps are still largely used in private houses in Germany) and a vase of flowers in summer, were largely in evidence. Sometimes, if the mistress of the house was young and frivolous, the heavy plush curtains hanging at each side of the well-starched and closely drawn white net ones would be stuck about with faded *cotillon* favours. There would be a book-case for books, and possibly a side table where other books were arranged methodically in twos all along the edge, looking so orderly that no one dared take up a volume for fear of spoiling the beautiful symmetry of the arrangement. None of the elegant litter seen in English drawing-rooms was to be found; all magazines and papers were put away, and the "Tägliche Rundschau,"

folded on the writing-table, looked as though it defied anyone to disturb its neatly-lying sheets.

The outlook of the ordinary German woman of the middle-class—she who keeps perhaps one, or at most two, servants—seems to be much more circumscribed than that of the corresponding class in England. Her interests after marriage are expected to be bounded by her husband and family. She scarcely keeps in touch with the outside world, and if she indulges in sport or any form of pleasure other than the theatre, which is patronized by middle-class and comparatively poor people to an extent much greater than it is in England, she would be considered rather *modern*, and when one German woman says of another that she is *sehr modern* —they put the accent on the last syllable—then all the rest of her sex know what to think of her. There is a certain stuffiness in the German home life, it is apt to be *kleinlich*, as they themselves call it, petty and circumscribed, to degenerate into a mere struggle to keep things going, to have for its chief aim the stimulus of the children to new educational efforts, sometimes with tragically disastrous results. At half-past six in summer, and seven in winter, in all classes, high and low, the whole family partake of breakfast—it may be earlier if the school the children attend is at a distance. The custom of living in flats, so universal in Germany, is not a very good one for children, and those parents who can afford it try to bring them up in the country if they can, where there is space to move and breathe, but the ordinary

mother of a German town-child is constantly on the rack between two dire possibilities that may befall her offspring: the one that they may get *nerven-krank*, a nervous breakdown, or, on the other hand, that they may fail to be *versetzt*, and of the two, the nervous illness would be perhaps the least to be feared. It would at any rate have no stigma attached to it, as would the failure to get the remove into a higher class.

German children at a very early age appear to be weighed down with a burden of school-books. Each carries a hard, square satchel, rather like a soldier's knapsack, on his back, and their conversation appears to be made up of questions and answers as to the progress of each other's studies. Inside the satchel, lying on top of the school-books and blue exercise books, is a substantial "*Butter-Brödchen*" which the careful mother provides daily for each child. In the afternoons, when they return from school, she must have ready for them, probably prepared by her own hands, a substantial meal, beginning with soup and continuing through various dishes, such as boiled beef and rice with prunes, smoked herring and salad, spinach and eggs to *Schokoladen Brei*. Then she must take the children out to "snap up a little fresh air," as she puts it, and soon after five they must return and begin to work at their lessons for the next day. No wonder that in the winter-time the children grow pale and pasty-looking. Few German children have the bright clear complexions that we see in England. A sallow muddy skin is the result

of the long hours spent in hot, airless rooms, for every German flat is heated, not to say overheated in the winter-time, and the double windows are rarely opened for fear of wasting the precious caloric. The German woman is as yet only imperfectly trained in the beauties of fresh air; she is cruelly susceptible to draughts, as anyone knows who has had the misfortune to travel with her in railway trains; she has hardly begun to master the secrets of domestic hygiene, she is herself extraordinarily subject to nerves, and the only holiday she takes is a "*Kur*" of a few weeks every summer in some remote "*Bade-Ort.*" The whole energies of the middle-class woman of somewhat restricted means are concentrated in the effort to save up enough money to take herself, her husband, and family to the seaside or to the mountains during the *Ferien*,—the children's summer holiday in July,—when every hotel is packed to bursting-point, when prices are at their highest, and fitting accommodation almost impossible to come by. One meets her at such places by thousands, clad in tightly fitting, trailing, and eminently unsuitable gowns, walking sedately and perspiringly along the broad, neat, sandy paths so well maintained by the Government through all parts of the forest. She looks gravely conscientious, as though anxious to get her money's worth in fresh air for herself and family, and she may be enjoying herself, but she never betrays the fact in look or gesture. Probably the absence of housekeeping worries and the pleasure of eating meals which she

herself has had no share in preparing are the greatest assets of her holiday. Her walks—she hates walks as a rule—are chiefly initiated by a desire to get rid of that superfluous flesh which so implacably pursues the German woman after her fortieth year, and her enjoyment of the air and scenery is languid and perfunctory. She will stop at the *Aus-sichts-punkt*—the view—carefully indicated by a signboard lest the traveller should not notice it, and let off the usual exclamations "*Herrlich! Wunderschön! Pracht-voll!*" but she is liable to have her inner consciousness absorbed by the narrowness of her own domestic life. The snatches of conversation that one overhears in the beautiful pine forests sound singularly inappropriate to the environment of the speakers. One wonders why they should choose lovely glades of shimmering light and shade for the purpose of bemoaning the high price of meat, the delinquencies of "Anna," and the fearful rapidity with which Hans wears out his shoes.

The wealthy German woman is not often to be seen taking holiday in her native pine-forests. She prefers to go farther afield, and before the War was to be found in countless numbers at such places as Bournemouth, the Isle of Wight, Cromer, and other watering-places on the east and south coast, where with her family she improved her knowledge of England and its language, and took her first lessons in golf. She also travelled a good deal in Italy, and was able to converse fluently on the Cinquecento period without really under-

standing much about it. She took to English sports, tobogganed and ski-ed in Switzerland, fished in Norway, yachted at Cowes and Kiel, and became agreeably cosmopolitan. She was not specially typical of her country, but rather of a class to be found everywhere.

The average German girl as she grows towards womanhood, especially if she has wealthy parents and can therefore be pretty certain of realizing her ambitions, has one desire—to marry, and to marry if possible an officer. In Germany there is no limit to the length to which wealthy people of obscure birth will go in their efforts to gain a footing in the class from which they are separated by an insurmountable barrier. Few people in England realize the difficulty that wealthy people in Germany have when not provided with the magic "von" which enables them to be considered "*Hof-fähig*"—Court-capable—in gaining an entry into the poor but impecunious circle of the blue-blooded aristocracy surrounding the throne. It matters not how rich, how truly cultivated, how well equipped in all the essentials that make real "gentle-people" they may be, without the magic monosyllable they cannot hope to penetrate to the inner arcanum of the socially ambitious, can never be one of the crowd of ladies who have achieved the infinite boredom of dragging a heavy court train past their sovereign at one of the *Cours* of the Berlin winter season.

One young naval officer on temporary duty on the "Hohenzollern" did not cease to petition the Emperor

at every opportunity to grant him the privilege of ennoblement, and when pressed for his reason, he said that he wished to marry a wealthy and beautiful girl, who was determined to rise a step in rank when she married. She was a very nice, well-educated girl, and her name was Fräulein Schmidt. She didn't mind much about looks or money, and she liked the officer very much, but was determined not to marry him without a title. The Emperor, touched by the woebegone complaints of the lover, who was an excellent officer, granted his desire, and the marriage was celebrated immediately after the patent of nobility had arrived; and everybody thought the bride and bridegroom to have been eminently sensible and reasonable in their ambitions.

The German woman who appeared to me the most broad-minded and cultivated of her sex—cultivated I mean in the wider sense, not merely having acquired a knowledge of several languages and certain historical and literary facts, but who possessed a wide and tolerant mental outlook—was the educated Jewish woman. She was invariably alert and up-to-date. She had artistic sense, her house was furnished in an original and tasteful manner, she dressed herself beautifully, was liberal in her charities, lavish in her hospitality, and had distinct social gifts. The Jewish woman is only just beginning to fight her way into German society, but she does it very efficiently and is well equipped for the struggle.

From early childhood the tact is consistently im-

pressed upon the German woman by parents and brothers, aunts and uncles, and, when she grows older, by her husband and sons, that she is, being feminine, inferior in physical and mental capacity to her masculine relatives. There is nothing gallant and chivalrous in the character of the German husband. He will be kind to his wife, will love her faithfully, will see that she is as well dressed as his means afford, but he will not carry her parcels—she would be very astonished if he proposed to do it; he will never open doors for her or surround her with the sweet observances dear to a woman's heart. Even during the period of courtship, at a time when the fluttering *Braut* reaches the highest pinnacle of happiness, the proud *Bräutigam* is not conspicuously considerate of his *Schatz*—his treasure—as he loves to call her. He will still puff the strongest cigar-smoke into her face even while he holds her hand in a lover-like clasp. He will buy her beautiful gifts of flowers,—they are very cheap in Germany,—but he will never deny himself in the smallest way to give her pleasure. He will be full of easy generosity. If she expresses a desire for a thing he will buy it if he has the money in his pocket, but he will resent the slightest interference with his personal comfort, and he encourages an apologetic and worshipping frame of mind in the girl he has chosen to be his wife. All German education —up to the present time almost entirely under the direction and control of men—encourages in women a submissive, purely domestic spirit. Copious extracts

from "Hermann und Dorothea" and similar literature, setting forth, from the man's point of view, what is expected of woman in her capacity as wife—how she must be submissive, first to her parents then to her husband, and always ask their advice and never judge for herself on any matter—are to be found in all the reading books of German *Höhere-Töchter-Schule,* and in no schools, whether private or Government, is the girl allowed any responsibility whatever, all that is asked of her is that she shall obey and learn. And as a rule, having nothing to distract her mind, wearing a school uniform calculated to chasten the soul and inspire each girl with an idea of the paucity of her own charms, with her hair plaited tightly and uncompromisingly and twisted round her head in hard inartistic coils, exercising her muscles in the conscientious German manner chiefly in the indoor gymnasium, a stranger to the joys of hockey and other fresh-air games, she concentrates her mind on the only distraction she has—the acquisition of knowledge. She throws herself violently into the study of languages, literature and geography, mathematics and "religion"—of science she learns nothing with the exception of a little elementary chemistry and natural history, but even these are administered in small doses, and the greater scientific truths are carefully withheld from her. So that when she emerges from school, when she has passed the Rubicon of "Confirmation," which to a German girl is the great barrier between her childhood and her emancipation from irksome

school discipline, she emerges into a radiant world, where to her everything is good. She is able to garnish her conversation with appropriate quotations from Schiller, Goethe, and Shakespeare; she possesses a certain limited culture which suffices for her needs, and she has learned industry, cheerfulness, and self-sacrifice, and to content herself with very small pleasures. The capacity she possesses for extracting the last drop of enjoyment from the tiniest entertainment is unequalled by the girl of any other nation. If she marries she sinks into a rather humdrum round of domestic duties. Even if she gains the coveted prize of an officer, her life is apt to be extremely dull, and she must manage her house with only one servant and the occasional help at table of her husband's *Bursche* or soldier-servant, who in all probability is a youth of bucolic stupidity and crass ignorance. She abandons on her marriage-day any further attempt to cultivate her mind, being certain that the stock of knowledge she has accumulated while at school will supply all the needs of her soul, which, for the rest of her existence, will be fed chiefly by emotions, by the love of her husband and children, and by her patriotism, for no woman in the world is so blindly patriotic as the present-day middle-class German woman. Through it she gains an outlet for her many suppressed aspirations, she breathes into it that spirit of romanticism, of fierce self-sacrifice which her husband, growing stout and dull and uninteresting, has never been able to inspire. It stirs within her breast vague

yearnings and longings after unutterable things. She is stimulated and entranced by something outside and above herself, and when she sings, "*Heil dir im Siege-Kranz*," she breathes it like a prayer, like an outpouring of her inmost soul. All the sheer stodginess and narrowness of her own existence fade away into nothingness and are replaced by an exaltation of spirit, a burning enthusiasm, which, though to an outsider it may contain many elements of the ridiculous, yet none the less embodies the national passion and the national ideal.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PRUSSIAN COURT

THE tedium of Court ceremonies is only too well known to those who are fated to take part in them, and the inner life of Courts, hedged round as it is with certain artificial conditions, conventions, and restrictions which do not prevail in ordinary human intercourse, is apt to partake of the humdrum and the monotonous to a degree which becomes intolerable to a person of alert and independent mind. The Prussian Court, in spite of its innumerable activities, was no exception to this rule, and the smaller German Courts, as far as one could judge, were the most soul-stifling places imaginable. Yet the domestic life of the Prussian Court, so long as any of the seven children of the Emperor were still at home, especially, indeed, so long as the youngest one, the only daughter, now Duchess of Brunswick, remained unmarried, was the centre of a very affectionate family life, which grouped itself around the person of the Empress. In the intimacies of home there was nothing that was different from that of any other high-class German household. The children were brought up in a very happy

atmosphere, and the sons, when at the age of ten they were sent away, first to school and college, and finally installed at the age of eighteen in houses of their own, always paid frequent visits to the old home. Prince Adalbert at Kiel always mourned that he was not so favourably situated in this respect as his brothers at Potsdam.

But outside of what one might call this domestic nucleus, there stretched an area of vapidity and emptiness, a mental atmosphere, as some one once called it, "of shut-up rooms into which the light and air from outside may only penetrate in very small doses." It was remarkable that at the Court of one of the most alert and active kings who has ever sat upon the throne of Prussia—I refer, of course, to William II, German Emperor—this sense of dullness and stupidity should be the prevailing impression. The various ladies and gentlemen who made up the *Hof-Staat*, or Court circle, were not individually less intelligent and gifted than the rest of the world, and some of them had indeed gifts of a special order; yet collectively and in the exercise of their functions at Court, they appeared to me as though belonging to a world of thought in which people outside of it had little share. A good deal of this effect may, I think, be traced to the fact that the ladies and gentlemen-in-waiting at the Prussian Court, as well as the other officials, such as the Master of the Horse, the Mistress of the Robes, do not change with a change of Ministry, but remain permanently attached, and are, as far as I

could judge, expected to keep themselves entirely aloof from interest in, or discussion of, politics.

It may have been a reaction from the course pursued by the Empress Frederick, who, it is well known, took a very active interest in all political questions; but the present Empress, whose natural bent is in other directions, very much dislikes any of her ladies to have any precise views on national questions. Their rôle, in her opinion, should be one of graceful acquiescence and approval, or if they venture an opinion it should be one not opposed to the Emperor's own. She never liked to have the domestic current of existence disturbed by the acerbities of politics. Disputes and arguments were painfully frequent necessities of existence, but why introduce them unnecessarily?

And the ladies, cultivated and kind-hearted, as I knew them, and of a fine, self-sacrificing spirit, acquiesced in their mistress's desire and wisely kept their opinions to themselves, for at Court countless other things occupy the mind; there are tedious, tiresome letters to write, ceremonies to attend, elaborate clothes to be put on or put off, and a general conciliatory attitude must be adopted to every one, high or low, that one meets. The three principal ladies, who were given the title of *Excellenz* after long service, had been in the service of the Empress from the time of her marriage, when she was only Princess William, and their permanent home was the Court, which they had never quitted in all those years, excepting for the yearly summer holiday, when

for three weeks they were released from their duties and went to take a rest cure among the mountains. The lady who held the post of *Ober-Hof-Meisterin*, equivalent to our Mistress of the Robes, one of the three ladies above mentioned, was a woman of remarkable independence of thought and character, humorous, broad-minded, full of insight and intuition, and gifted with great common sense and a blunt manner of speaking the truth, which was almost uncanny at Court, where a system of wrapping up things and hiding facts seems to be an almost inevitable condition of existence. Her downright manner did not invariably make her beloved, but she remains in my mind one of the finest natures that I encountered in Germany. Unfortunately her influence was not felt as much as one might have expected in the Court itself, which remained impenetrable to the progressive thought, the new aspects that the world has assumed during the last hundred years. Such names, for example, as those of Darwin and Herbert Spencer were looked upon with mistrust and dislike. They were the names of men who wished to upset the old order of things, who disturbed men's comfortable beliefs and settled convictions. Nobody at Court would think of reading their books, but actively disliked their doctrines, whatever they were, without knowing much about them. The wonderful world of science and discovery, as applied to the amelioration of the conditions of human existence, remained, as far as the Court was concerned, a closed book. Louis Pasteur's name, for

example, was hardly known there, and only those new inventions were regarded with interest which might be applied to military purposes, as, for example, the motor-car,—for it was during my residence at the Prussian Court that the first automobile penetrated into the sacred area where formerly Frederick the Great had seen his soldiers drilling. Automobiles were regarded by the ladies of the Court as innovations of the most detestable character, quite unworthy of the dignity of palaces, and any accident happening to them, a punctured tyre or a breakdown of any kind, was looked upon as a direct interposition of Providence to frustrate the unholy desires of man for improving on nature. It was useless to urge that railway trains came almost within the same category as automobiles, only we had been used to them all our lives. And I still remember, with a distinct feeling of annoyance, that, in connexion with railways, the name of George Stephenson seemed to convey nothing to anyone in the Palace.

"What!" I remember saying to the Princess. "You never heard of the man who invented railway trains?"

She vaguely murmured some German name which I did not recognize. She was quite sure, whoever he was, he must be a German.

Automobiles in England were getting quite commonplace objects of the road at the time when the first one rolled in between the great iron gates past the sentries on to the *Sand-Hof* before the façade of the Palace, which in its French rococo style is slightly reminiscent

of Versailles. The Emperor was very enthusiastic over his new purchase and could talk of nothing else at table. A great deal was said about the frequent accidents with horses, and William, I remember, was very insistent on the necessity of having special roads for automobiles, so that they could be kept apart from the other traffic.

"But the cost of the roads would be enormous, your Majesty," some one remarked; and the Emperor looked distinctly annoyed. It was one of his characteristics never to reckon the cost of a scheme—he had a truly Imperial disregard for matters of finance.

At the Imperial table, unless the Emperor was, as usually happened, in a talkative mood, and himself sustained the chief burden of the conversation, it was apt to flag and dwindle immediately into mere commonplaces. People made timid, rather futile observations, occasional silences would fall deadly cold upon the table, even the most brilliant talkers appeared somewhat constrained, and afraid of making any original remark lest it might not meet with Imperial approval. This always struck me as strange, for a very small joke seemed to go a long way in Imperial circles, and was welcomed with eager and exaggerated hilarity and repeated to the remotest possibility of repetition.

The dinner-table conversation was apt to get into a groove of smooth politeness, as nobody ever disputed or even by the most roundabout innuendo contradicted any statement His Majesty chose to make.

Once I remember thrilling the circle seated round the

table at Rominten, the Emperor's East Prussian hunting-lodge, by venturing to correct His Majesty's translation of a word.

He was telling in his usual picturesque and emphatic manner a story of the time when his sons were little boys and first began to study under a German tutor. In their infancy they had always been accustomed to hearing and speaking more English than German, so knew comparatively little of the latter language, much to the indignation of many good German patriots. The tutor asked one of the boys—it was Prince Adalbert, who afterwards entered the German Navy—if he could tell him what was the emblem of Germany, and received the English word "eagle" in reply. The tutor, who knew no English, shrank back in horror, hardly believing his ears; for the German word *Igel*—hedgehog—is pronounced in exactly the same way, and the thought that a son of the Kaiser could possibly believe that this ignoble animal represented the German Empire was naturally very painful and repellent to the good Professor.

The Emperor told the anecdote, speaking in German, and gave the English translation of the word *Igel* as "porcupine," a mistake arising easily from the association of ideas. He repeated the mistake several times, but though the adjutants and the ladies sitting in his immediate vicinity all obviously recognized the error—one of them indeed asked me in a whisper, "But isn't 'porcupine' *Stachel-Schwein* in German?"—none of

them, to my surprise, made any remark, but seemed tacitly agreed to let the mistake pass unnoticed.

But I, rushing in perhaps where aides-de-camp and Court ladies feared to tread, and moved by the pedagogic instinct which prompts the correction of other people's lapses, called out when I next heard the offending word :

"Hedgehog, not porcupine, your Majesty."

I do not know if I contravened any rule of Court etiquette in thus boldly correcting the German Emperor at his own table, but I noticed a sort of relieved look on the faces of the suite. They evidently had been torn between a desire for accuracy and a reluctance to be the means of bringing it about.

As for the Emperor, he stared at me with frowning eyes for a moment, not angry eyes, but merely concentrated in thought, and then immediately recognizing the mistake he had made, corroborated my remark.

"What ? Hedgehog ? Why, yes, of course it is. Hedgehog, not porcupine. Both rather prickly, though —eh ? "

And he went off into a loud roar of laughter at his own joke.

That was an irritating feature, that nobody dared to disagree openly or to traverse anything the Emperor said, and although he had no objection to being put right on small matters of detail as in the above instance, yet he grew rather irritable with people who differed in opinion, hence I suppose the reluctance to enter into discussion which was so pronounced a feature of Court

life. Indeed, one noticed how if for a few moments anyone ventured to oppose any of the Emperor's views, they often allowed him to evade the point in dispute and triumphantly bring forward some side issue with which they felt bound to agree. When this was conceded, His Majesty, with a triumphant nod of the head, would walk off, evidently delighted with his own perspicacity and the convincingness of his arguments. I have known people in humbler spheres pursue very similar tactics.

Picnics at Court were of almost daily occurrence. They were not conspicuous for gaiety, and usually involved a tremendous amount of preliminary waiting.

"How splendid!" remarked a *Kammer-herr* once. "Your English name for *Hof Damen und Herrn*—ladies and gentlemen-in-waiting. How truly descriptive! Yes, we are always waiting, waiting."

And the waiting for the arrival of the Kaiser at picnics often stretched into an hour or more. Excursions on the water or in carriages were usually made to some one of the many little Royal castles, scattered so liberally in the neighbourhood of Potsdam by dead and gone members of the Hohenzollern family, who appear in an extraordinary degree to have exercised a love of building queer, picturesque, rather small and inconvenient dwellings for themselves, in any spot which happened to strike their fancy.

In Potsdam, where the river Havel winds bewilderingly up and down among the land, forming a maze of beautiful lakes, whose creeks run up almost into the

principal streets of the town, these trips were usually made by water, in the little steamer "Alexandria."

The first sign at the New Palace that a picnic was afoot would be a procession of carriages moving slowly over the Mopke—the wide space in front of the Palace lying between it and the stables—going towards the various entrances to pick up the different individuals who were to form the party. Other Royal carriages might be sent to Potsdam to fetch one or two invited guests, and the big kitchen wagons, containing cold viands and table implements, could also be seen moving off by road to the appointed rendezvous in the woods. None of the usual hilarity and fun attendant on ordinary everyday picnics, such as for example the little Princess sometimes enjoyed with her companions, was ever to be discovered in these Court excursions. They were tedious affairs, where most people looked bored and unhappy and apprehensive of catching cold. They partook too much of the nature of functions, and the wearisome waiting for the Emperor's arrival put everybody out of tune. When the Princess was allowed to join the party, there was an inevitable but invariably futile attempt made by the conscientious *Ober-Gouvernante*, always seconded and chiefly stimulated and inspired by the ladies-in-waiting, to keep the little Princess at home. They very much disapproved of the excitement—though there was nothing wildly exciting about the business—and the association with grown-up people, and they had old-fashioned ideas about keeping the Princess childish and

unsophisticated. They were very keen that she should lead a simple life, and their theories, I have not the slightest doubt, were excellent; but what they always failed to take into account was the fact that the parents of the Princess, the Emperor and Empress, had other views on the subject, and that the character of the Princess herself, an eager, active, impulsive personality, was already developed far beyond the simple, bread-and-butter limit which they had decided was the proper boundary of her existence until she emerged from the schoolroom a fully-fledged Princess. The lady into whose hands was given the task of supervising the education of the Royal children always continued valiantly to fight in defence of her theories, and always retired from the combat conspicuously worsted; for her remonstrances were invariably unavailing, though she always consoled herself with the remark, "*Ich habe meine Pflicht getan*"—"I have done *my* duty."

So that picnics, like all other pleasures which infringed the regular rules laid down for the existence of the Princess, who was supposed to be in bed every night by nine o'clock, were marked, between the announcement of their imminence and the actual moment when the Royal carriages drove up to the door, by extraordinarily acrimonious skirmishes between two opposing elements, in which the Empress and the Princess on the one side were ranged against the solid phalanx—they believed themselves loyally bound, whatever their private

opinions might be, to stand or fall together—of the ladies of the Court, who, standing shoulder to shoulder and like party politicians all uttering the same arguments and catch phrases, were, as I have said, without exception ignominiously crushed under the hand of superior authority. With a dauntless persistence, which might be considered, if tactless, yet worthy of admiration, they always, time after time, repeated the same interminable tactics, so that all picnics, on what may be called the feminine side of the Court, started under somewhat gloomy auspices, as the combatants, victors and vanquished, laboured for some time under a sense of injury or defeat, and an atmosphere charged with a sulky sense of outrage was the one in which the "party of pleasure" set out towards its appointed destination.

Usually all the ladies and gentlemen and the invited guests drove first of all to the landing-stage, where was a spacious wooden hall, built by the Emperor, in Norwegian style. Here everybody assembled, standing about and talking; old generals in uniform, their swords clanking, wandered about from group to group shaking hands ponderously and meditatively in the German way, which insists that everybody at a party shall greet everybody else there present. Then a long wait ensued, until presently, perhaps, the carriage of the Princess appeared, and everybody would rush to the entrance. There would be more bows, hand-shakings, greetings. The young Princess, laughing and talking gaily, brought

life and an atmosphere of cheerful youth into the dull assembly. No wonder that her parents liked to have her there! There was further waiting. Some of the ladies would subside on to the hard wooden Norwegian chairs with which the hall is furnished, or examine the carved bowls on the shelf running round the room, or try to hide a yawn behind a white *glacé* glove. Then a footman dashes in.

"*Majestäten kommen,*" he announces. The ladies in the chairs jump up hurriedly, the officials on duty crowd round the entrance, while the rest of the party line up behind them on each side. The Princess stands in the doorway on the top step. There is a trampling of horses' hoofs on the gravel, and a universal bow bends the assembly just, I used to think, as corn is bowed when a stray breeze passes over a field of wheat. The Empress would step forward, bowing graciously, with that rather weary but pleasant and never-failing smile of hers. A Royalty, especially a female Royalty, who cannot smile readily in public is always, in Court circles, regarded, whatever other qualities she may possess, as a complete failure. So the Empress, however tired she may feel, fights valiantly against her own fatigue, shakes hands, makes kindly, chatty remarks to every one within her reach, while her husband in his brilliant uniform stalks round among the officers, sometimes standing in front of one with folded arms, indulging in a prolonged and searching look, then he says something, obviously something funny, for every one near

enough to hear bursts into the ready laughter that attends all Royal jokes, and finally His Majesty shakes hands with the culprit and passes on to some one else.

Close to the landing-stage on which the waiting-room is built lies the little river steamer, painted in white and gold, with her smart crew of blue-clad sailors, men belonging to the Emperor's sea-going yacht "Hohenzollern." On the shining water which stretches away as far as one can see, white swans, the Havel swans, which are under the protection of the Crown, glide in and out of the dense masses of reeds bordering the water-side; and at a little distance, permanently moored about four hundred yards from the shore, lies an English ship, —I wonder if she is still there,—the "Royal Louise," presented to King Frederick William III of Prussia by William IV of England as an interesting souvenir of the British Navy of those days. How often we used to pass her, her hull painted black and white, all her masts and rigging silhouetted clearly against the sunset. Sails she had none, for the only voyage she ever made was the one from England all those many years ago. She just rode there, year in, year out, growing more old and out of date, and the fresh coat of paint she received from time to time appeared only to intensify the fact that she was a very ancient, out-of-date piece of goods.

"There she is, your English ship," the Emperor would say to me, when we were all on board; "look at

her port-holes and the size of her guns. Looks like a toy, doesn't she ? "

Sometimes the German naval officers—there were always one or two among the suite of the Emperor—would come and talk to me about our British ships, and I always took a malicious pleasure in pointing out that the German Navy, whatever the future might have in store, could never enjoy a picturesque sea-fight like Trafalgar.

" No artist will ever worry to put the sea-fights of the future on to canvas," I would say; and we then went on to talk about the beauty of full-rigged sailing-ships and the absence of artistic possibilities in the modern ironclad, but never in that light chatter did I really grasp the possibility of hostilities between England and Germany. It seemed so utterly unthinkable that anything could disturb that pleasant, friendly intercourse. The naval officers of the German Empire were to me always the finest of her sons, immeasurably superior to those of the army. They possessed a direct, frank simplicity, and spoke with enthusiasm of their friendship with British officers whom they had met in ports abroad.

As the little " Alexandria " steamed across the broad-bosomed Havel, crowds of small boats converged upon her from all directions; and the big steamers which ply up and down between Berlin and Potsdam, packed tightly with perspiring crowds of people, would, as they passed, break out into frantic cheers and a flutter

of waving pocket-handkerchiefs. The Emperor and Empress sat on camp stools on the upper deck, together with a few of the guests, while the rest of us stayed below, watching the changing light on the waters and enjoying the cool breeze that came across the river. The ladies would perhaps for a while continue to give expression to their dissatisfaction at the presence of the young Princess on board, and re-enumerate all the reasons why it would have been so much better if she had been left at home—reasons with which everybody was in perfect agreement, though nobody in view of the repeated failures of the ladies' own efforts was able to contribute any helpful suggestion to a discussion which was as futile as it was wearisome, yet which was invariably repeated during all the years of my residence at the Prussian Court.

Sometimes we landed at Pfauen-Insel, the tiny Isle of Peacocks, though no peacocks are now to be seen there, and ate our supper, a simple meal, consisting of soup and one or two cold dishes, usually *Kalte Schnitzel*, or "cold slices," of ham, tongue, veal, sausage, and other cold meats, all put on the same dish and handed round to the guests to choose for themselves which they will take. The supper was eaten out of doors in an angle of the tiny absurd little Schloss, built in imitation of a ruin by the husband of Queen Louise, Frederick William III of Prussia. He and his wife with their children, the second of whom afterwards became the "Old" Emperor William I, spent a good deal of time

here; and Louise's bonnets and a queer high-waisted, much-braided, military-looking riding-habit of hers still hangs in the cupboard, while her spinet, with all its strings broken, and giving forth no sound when its queer narrow black keys are struck, yet has its place in the sunny angle of the window where she used to sit and play it to her children.

These picnics always appeared to me infinitely preferable to the stiff meals which we took indoors, where every one had to appear in elegant evening toilet; but it was surprising how little the Court ladies and gentlemen appeared to enjoy them.

I had a conversation with one of the Emperor's aides-de-camp as to his experiences of the frequent journeys of His Majesty abroad, of the cruises to Norway or in the Mediterranean. The Count shuddered visibly as he spoke of them, and a look of acute misery spread over his features.

"No one can have any idea what discomforts we have to suffer. The Emperor asks a great many more people on board than can possibly be properly accommodated. He never understands that a ship is not elastic. He seems to think it means just laying extra covers and ordering in more stores; he never thinks what it is for me, a man of my years and bulk,"—he was of a figure which in Germany is called *wohl-beleibt*—well-bodied,—"to be squeezed into a tiny cabin where I can with difficulty turn round, and to have to sleep on a hard bunk—for they *are* hard, very hard—instead of a

spring mattress. Then I am *always* sea-sick—always. His Majesty too suffers when it is *very* rough, but I get upset easily. I am in misery all the time I am at sea, and "—here he whispered mysteriously—" the 'Hohenzollern' is a bad sea-boat, she rolls frightfully when the least sea is on. I'm all right on a big steamer, but I can't stand these sea trips with His Majesty."

The younger men did not mind so much, but were none of them enthusiastic.

"It is so different," they would say, "when one travels for one's own pleasure, from what it is when one travels as part of one's *Dienst.* We feel rather like footmen, always hanging about ready to be ordered to do something. We are always glad to get back again to our proper work."

And indeed an atmosphere of oppressive boredom—perhaps, it may be, inevitable at all Courts—prevailed to an acute degree. The hours of service were very long, especially for the adjutants who were on duty, as they had to be up at six so as to get through all the correspondence and have it duly arranged by nine o'clock. If, as frequently happened in the summer-time, they rode with the Emperor before breakfast, they had to rise still earlier.

Their breakfast was a very hurried one, to correspond with that of His Majesty, who rarely spent more than a quarter of an hour over his first meal, and then they must be ready to accompany William and the Empress, their children, and several yellow dachshunds on that

after-breakfast walk which only bad weather was allowed to interfere with.

At ten o'clock the audiences of the day began, and the adjutants were always required to be within call, so they hung wearily about, unoccupied, but not free to occupy themselves until luncheon, the German *Mittag-Essen*, the principal meal of the day. Both before and after this meal there was much desultory talk and waiting; indeed, I think the most striking part of a courtier's existence is the amount of time wasted—the stultifying, soul-destroying want of intelligent interest in life, together with the impossibility of finding time for really essential things. There was much covert grumbling at this unnecessary waste of other people's activities, for before the epoch of William II Court life had been simpler and made fewer demands on the energies and strength of the suite; but the present German Emperor is never seen either in public or private life alone. He is a man who appears to dislike solitude and self-communion. If he walks in the garden, it is never by himself.

At the time of what has been called the "November Storm," which arose in Germany after the publication in the "Daily Telegraph" of October 28, 1908, of the famous interview between the Emperor and some unknown person who hoped thereby "to remove that obstinate misconception of the character of the Kaiser's feelings towards England, deeply rooted in the ordinary Englishman's breast," the Emperor was seen walking, as was

his wont, up and down the gravelled court-yard around which the Palace is built, accompanied by two of his *Flügel-Adjutants*. From my sitting-room in the angle of the Palace I saw the three men pacing ceaselessly up and down the long arid stretch of gravel, in full view of all the windows; but the remarkable thing was the silence that hung over them. The usual animated gestures, the constant emphatic noddings of the head and shaking of the forefinger that were the accustomed accompaniments of the Emperor's conversation, were absent. He paced up and down in a gloomy, crushed attitude, looking on the ground, and addressing never a word to the two men who were with him; so that the three went wearily backwards and forwards time after time, in the completest and strangest silence. After a while, perhaps half an hour later, I glanced through the window again, and saw that the trio was still there; but the two gentlemen—one was a military, the other a naval officer—had fallen behind the Emperor, who strode on a few paces in front of them, still in that grieved and broken attitude, seemingly absorbed in his own thoughts and obviously undergoing acute mental suffering. It seemed to me strangely characteristic of the man, that at a time when a cloud had obscured his popularity with his people, when he was smarting under the sense of having, with the very best intentions in the world, by his candid indiscretions, brought a storm of resentment and criticism upon his own head, at the moment when, if ever, a man needed to be alone with himself and his

own thoughts, he had not thought fit to dispense with the attendance of his gentlemen, and had chosen a very conspicuous part of the Palace grounds in which to air the undoubted heaviness and depression of mind from which he was suffering.

CHAPTER IX

THE KAISER

LOOKING back across the intervening years which separate me from the day in 1902 when I first saw and spoke to the Kaiser, I try to recall my impressions of him before and after that time, the man as I pictured him in my mind, and the man I discovered him to be during the seven years in which I had opportunities to see, hear, and study that unique personality.

He had seized my imagination, as he has seized that of many others. There was something so human, even in his blunders, something that kept him from the remoteness of other monarchs, who moved like well-regulated machinery across the vision of the world, keeping their proper places in the orbit of their respective spheres; but here was one who turned no merely official face to the public, but put his own personality, his individual tastes and manner of thought candidly before it, who seemed to conceal nothing, to take every one into his confidence and be charmingly, indiscreetly frank and open.

The German Emperor had long ago galvanized the

world into alert expectation, was alternately admired and condemned, had spoken more wisdom and more foolishness than the average monarch permits himself. In England, our former admiration of him had received a rude shock by the publication of the " Kruger " telegram, a shock only partially neutralized by his appearance at the dying bed of his grandmother, Queen Victoria.

The manner of this sovereign, it has unanimously been conceded by all who have met him, has a great magnetic charm—the charm of a robust vitality, of a breezy unconventionality which, exhibited by a monarch to a mere man, contains much subtle flattery. At one leap, so to speak, William jumps down gaily from his Imperial throne and ranges himself with the greatest good-humour, frequently with jocularity, beside the person who, maybe for the first time, comes with some diffidence and shrinking into the awful presence of Royalty. The Emperor in most of his pictures prefers to be depicted with a stern, martial expression of countenance, the expression he assumes when on military duty, and this will probably also be the one he will wear for the first half-minute of his appearance at any interview, but it is speedily succeeded by a variety of even somewhat exaggerated humorous facial changes. If he laughs, which he is sure to do a good many times, he will laugh with absolute abandonment, throwing back his head, opening his mouth to the fullest possible extent, shaking his whole body, and often stamping with one foot to show

his excessive enjoyment of any joke. It is all very unexpected and, until one is used to it, almost disconcerting. He illustrates in his features to an unusual extent all the varied emotions that possess him, and has many quaint mannerisms, as, for example, he will continually shake the forefinger of his right hand into the face of anyone whom he wishes to convince, or will rock slowly on his toes backwards and forwards. At other times he will "jiggle," as children say, violently on one leg. Some days he appears to be more restless in this respect than others, and there are times when he preserves a staid, calm dignity of manner; but his usual, natural habit is the quick nervous one, the other is more or less assumed.

One has to admit that the Kaiser, though a good-looking man, is not quite so handsome as his portraits make him out to be. His nose is thick, his blue eyes rather hard and cold and shallow, excepting when they are creased in laughter, when they shine and sparkle like steel. His head is well shaped and there is as yet no trace of approaching baldness. His hair, at the time I saw him last in 1913, was beginning to be lightly frosted on the temples, but elsewhere was brown and plentiful; there were only a few grey threads to be seen in his upturned moustache. His lips are thick and red, closing over strong yellow well-preserved teeth (he always patronizes an American dentist), and his right hand of overwhelming strength, which he occasionally tests on the members of his suite, who, when the Kaiser happens

WILLIAM II, ON ST. HUBERT'S DAY, AT THE CLOSE OF THE CUSTOMARY HUNT, TALKING WITH HIS FOURTH SON, PRINCE AUGUSTUS WILLIAM. THE EMPEROR HAS ADDED A MILITARY CLOAK TO HIS HUNT UNIFORM

to be in a bantering mood, rather shrink from an Imperial hand-grip.

"The mailed fist," he once said to me when I could not restrain myself from wincing at his hand-shake. He made a wide grimace and his eyes were almost hidden by the creases of laughter round them.

He keeps his left arm, which is practically useless, always resting on his hip; his left hand, the fingers of which are ornamented with several heavy rings, also with a very ugly brown mole, is also incapable of much movement, being able only to retain small light things such as a glove or a paper. It also holds the reins when riding, but has no control over the horse, which has to be specially trained to respond only to knee pressure.

The Emperor looks a fine figure in uniform, but the greatest shock of my life—one which disillusioned me in a moment as it were—was the first sight of him in ordinary civilian tourist clothes. His Majesty was almost unrecognizable. I do not know if it was the cut of the clothes, or the colour, or the shape of the hat he was wearing, a somewhat buccaneering type of Panama, but I was irresistibly reminded of those gentlemen who come on the stage in rather "loud" garments at variety entertainments, and sing songs of mingled comedy and pathos to the applause of the gallery. The clothes looked like a bad disguise. Many German gentlemen lose much in appearance when out of uniform, but none to the extent that their Emperor does, for he no longer has any shred of dignity, and, curiously enough, that charm of

manner of which I have spoken is also bereft of its influence, merging into what seems almost an offensive and wearisome buffoonery. William is wise not to appear before his subjects excepting in uniform.

The Emperor has great faith in his own personal influence with the people and loses no opportunity of showing himself among them. He talks to them with ease, and usually has some humorous remark to make, which is repeated from mouth to mouth and sends the crowd into fits of laughter. He exploits his own personality for all it is worth. He is not a man to leave unemployed any natural gifts he may possess, and he knows that if you can amuse and interest people you can generally persuade them to agree with you on serious matters. He realizes that people are flattered and pleased by small personal gifts, and wherever he goes he sprinkles trifles of jewellery, books, or his own photographs, with lavish hand.

Once at table he told us how, on his last visit to Norway, when he landed from the "Hohenzollern" at a small Norwegian port, he noticed the absence of a certain good woman, the wife of the proprietor of a little inn built close to the quay, who, year after year, had invariably been on hand to present a bouquet of flowers to the Emperor when he landed, and on inquiry was told that the day before she had added another member to her already large family of ten children, and was greatly annoyed that she was for the first time prevented from carrying out the usual pleasant little ceremony.

So the Emperor gave an order to his adjutant to give a small present on His Majesty's part to the *braver Frau*, and a basket of flowers, together with packages of various *Delicatessen*, was sent to rejoice and console the heart of the invalid. These small kindnesses of His Majesty were always faithfully chronicled in the newspapers, and doubtless had their share in winning popularity.

German school reading-books are liberally besprinkled with accounts of similar incidents in the lives of the "Old Emperor" and the Emperor Frederick, together with many of the present reigning Emperor and Empress, small and insignificant anecdotes, but none the less powerful in bringing the mind of childhood into definite and pleasant relation with the ruling powers.

No one can judge a man, especially a man so many-sided, of so many varying moods as the German Emperor, at one interview. The character of this monarch has so many manifestations of itself, some of them so palpably contradicting the others, that it is quite possible to come away after an hour's talk with him—an hour of that astonishingly frank, fluent torrent of words so characteristic of the man—believing that this is the last and the only real revelation of the Kaiser's personality, that other men's conceptions of him have been false.

Those who have stood on one side and watched the effect of these various interviews with men of all nations —grave American professors, English bishops and men of mark in the literary or scientific world—can always forecast the result. Without exception every one has

retired dazzled and charmed, too blinded by the honour of unbosomed Royalty, of a cataract of confidential self-revelations, to be able clearly to criticize, to weigh the intrinsic merit, of what has been said, or to appraise its value as a real contribution to the world's thought.

This is a great characteristic of the Emperor's conversation, its extreme plausibility, and a certain magnetic power of convincing men against the dictates of their own reason. The effect may be evanescent, but it is invariably produced. Later on there may be a reaction, and the first favourable impression, under the cold light of inner searching, will die away; but the gay charm of manner, the easy friendliness, maybe a slap on the shoulder or a familiar clutch on the arm on the Emperor's part, will have disarmed a too acute criticism. All men enjoy for once in their lives to be slapped on the back by an Emperor. It is a rare and precious experience, and remains the chief feature of the interview. They may not be aware, either, that it is the usual Imperial manner, but imagine that they alone have been able to arouse this unusual friendly geniality.

It is a very bitter thing to be disillusioned about anybody of whom one has held an exaggeratedly high opinion, and with me the process, though I fought strenuously against it, began very soon after my introduction to the Prussian Court. Personally, though I found the Emperor to be extraordinarily jolly and agreeable, not in the least as stern and grave as I had expected, by slow degrees I became convinced that he

did not even approximate to the great man I had hitherto believed him to be.

And the chief reason of this view—one that was, I found, accepted by his whole Court down to the humblest servant—was, I think, that the Emperor possessed so much of what to my English upbringing appeared to be "side." I cannot find any other word that just expresses that assertiveness of his own personality which I found absent in other Germans whom I met at that time. I became conscious too of the fact that this quality of the Emperor was rather obnoxious to his Court and secretly deplored by many of them. They were, almost without exception, dubious of the effect that their ruler's versatility, his brilliance, and his peculiar temperament and character might eventually have upon the destinies of the German race. Yet every individual at Court was conspicuously loyal to their Emperor. They put everything that he did in the best possible light. They exaggerated his good actions and minimized his foolish ones, but they were all, one perceived, secretly uneasy, anxious, and apprehensive.

The ladies of the household, grown grey in the service of their mistress the Empress, trained from youth in a school of blind devotion to the reigning house, never permitted themselves to question or to criticize anything that their versatile and restless Kaiser might do. Some people, especially those outside the Court circle, were inclined to ridicule this passive attitude of simple adoration, but to me there was in it something very touching

and sacred, quite apart from the fact that it was undoubtedly the wisest course to pursue, to believe that in the widest sense of the word "the King can do no wrong."

When trouble fell, as it did in the days I have before referred to, after the "Daily Telegraph" publication in 1908 of the Emperor's conversation with some one whose personality still remains unrevealed, every one seemed to take a personal share in it and to be overwhelmed by sorrow.

The gloom of the Prussian Court at that time, when the Emperor was attacked on every side for his indiscretions, not only by foreigners, but by his own Press and people, can hardly be adequately pictured. The Emperor made no attempt to conceal the deep dejection of his soul, but moved about—this man usually so loquacious, so pleased with himself and the world—in a mournful silence, speaking seldom and then in an undertone as though some one he loved were dead. Everybody else, too, seemed to talk in whispers, not daring to make any effort to break the ghastly silence that surrounded the Palace like a chilly winter atmosphere. The Empress, whose whole heart is wrapped up in the happiness of her husband and family, was in an agony of grief which she could hardly conceal in public. Her voice trembled when she made the simplest remark, there were always unshed tears in her tired, anxious blue eyes, she was nervous and restless and clung convulsively to her children. All the young Princes—the two at Plön and Prince Adalbert from Kiel—

made short, hurried visits home, in the hope of distracting their father from the brooding grief into which he appeared to have sunk. The Emperor was wounded to his very heart's core, in his pride, his self-esteem, and his personal vanity, which received a blow from which it recovered but slowly. His popularity with his people, always very great, never sunk to such a low ebb as at that time.

And if the Emperor and Court took so much to heart this estrangement of the public, the people themselves were hardly less moved to grief. I remember calling to see some friends living in Potsdam at that time, just an ordinary German household of the professional class, and they were plunged into almost as deep a depression, absolutely broken-hearted at the idea that their Emperor, at a time when the German people's sympathies were whole-heartedly on the side of the Boers, had, by his own confession, been actively employed in measures designed to aid the English.

To show how very deeply chagrined these people were, and what a personal matter they made of the affair, a children's party which they had intended to give two days after the newspaper revelations, was cancelled at the last moment, the parents declaring themselves utterly incapable of indulging in any festivities—even children's festivities—at such a sad time for Germany. And this attitude of mind was shared by many other Germans whom I met whose confidence in their Emperor was for the time very rudely shaken.

I was at Wildpark station, waiting to meet a friend coming from Berlin, when Prince von Bülow, wearing full-dress military uniform, descended from the train, and, accompanied by one of the Emperor's adjutants who had been sent to meet him, was driven to the New Palace for that fateful interview in which he was pledged to wring from the Kaiser a promise to abstain in the future from further "revelations" to the Press. An enormous crowd was gathered on the platform, many of them journalists, and as the Prince passed through them to the Royal carriage, which was waiting outside, all hats went off and a cheer was raised, only to be immediately quenched, for the occasion was felt to be too solemn for such demonstrations.

There can be no doubt that this incident was the real "beginning of the end" of Prince Bülow's Chancellorship, although it was only in the following year, ostensibly over the finance reform measure, that he resigned and was succeeded by Bethmann-Hollweg, whose first name, it may interest people to know who do not read German, is pronounced exactly like the English name, "Bateman."

Prince Bülow's retirement was a great loss to the German Empire in many ways, but chiefly because his personality was one that corrected and restrained much of the exuberance in that of the Emperor. He and his charming Italian wife dined frequently at the Royal table. The Princess was small and lively and wore diaphanous artistic gowns, which somewhat scandalized

the Court ladies, who were invariably clad in sober silks and satins of an unblemished respectability of design. Once, when an Italian royalty was visiting the Prussian Court,—it was in the days of slit dresses, very tight round the ankles, and no "undies" to speak of,—one of the *Hof-Damen* of the Empress was so distressed at the revelations of the Italian ladies' lower limbs, that she seriously proposed, and was with some difficulty restrained from sending to each delinquent's room a "tempestuous petticoat" borrowed from the housemaids.

Prince Bülow was a man of the world and of large diplomatic experience. He possessed great charm and urbanity of manner, and knew how to amuse and keep the Emperor in a good temper, and his abilities were perhaps greater than is generally known. The difficulties of his position have probably never been completely realized by those unacquainted with the Emperor's restless temperament.

Though William needs a very clever man to manage him, yet he dislikes any cleverness that is likely to come into collision with his own ideas. He is still, as ever, the monarch who dismissed Bismarck—the greatest German of his age, also, it may be, the least scrupulous.

The mediocrity of the men who surrounded the Emperor was marked. Probably no very clever man would wish to spend much of his time at Court, and the officials had their time fully occupied in the performance of their respective functions. One man only of those

officers who came and went, for they were not retained longer than two years, sometimes less, in the Kaiser's suite, seemed to possess conspicuous ability, and that of a somewhat dubious kind. A very plain man, an officer of about forty, with protruding eyes and a disagreeable expression, he was, generally speaking, disliked both by the members of the Kaiser's family and, as far as one could judge, by his fellow aides-de-camp. But he had great influence with the Emperor. They talked much together, always, from the scraps of conversation that one heard in passing, of things military or political —the man with a confident assertive tone and with a look of cunning in his sly eyes which was very repellent, while the monarch listened eagerly, obviously interested and convinced. Their talk, unlike the usual Court conversation, seemed always secretive, mysterious, and referred to other previous conversations. They retired into corners together or walked outside the windows apart from the rest. Nobody was sorry when at last the gentleman in question disappeared from Court and was next heard of in Turkey.

One gentleman of the Empress's suite, Baron von Mirbach, an elderly man of the old school, would often openly deplore, much to the amusement of his mistress, the change in the German spirit, the commercialism, the absence of the old ideals. The others would tell him that it was the inevitable progress of the race, the eternal age-old incompatibility between the old and the new generation, but he would shake his head gravely.

He made valiant attempts to stem the growing tide of irreligion which is so conspicuous in Germany.

"Our Fatherland," he said one day to me, "is day by day losing its faith. What have we to put in its place? The new generation is self-seeking, self-sufficient —our young Princes think only of their own enjoyment; they demand the privileges of their rank while they shirk its responsibilities. We need in them something more than a capacity to smile and be affable. They must have character. Have they got it?"

Herr von Mirbach's wife was a very charming, cultivated woman of Belgian nationality, who frequently came to Court, and often rode on horseback with the Empress, who liked her very much.

It was due to the efforts of the Baron that many new churches were built in Berlin and its environs. One of the finest among them, which to a certain extent canonized the old Emperor, the Kaiser's grandfather, was called the Emperor-William-Memorial Church, and was frequently attended by the Empress and her daughter.

The Mistress of the Robes to the Prussian Court, Countess Therese von Brockdorff, sat as model of one of the saints in its stained-glass windows.

It was very rarely indeed that any actual criticism of the Emperor's acts was heard in the Palace itself, but one gentleman, who occasionally permitted himself a certain licence in this respect, once said to me, in reference to some indiscretion of his "all-highest" master, "He is just like a child with a handful of

squibs. He throws them about and likes to hear the noise they make. Some day one of them will fall into a powder magazine and then he will be dreadfully surprised at the mess he has caused."

I was rather surprised that he permitted himself to say so much, for it was always a dangerous thing to air any personal convictions of that kind. They had a way of being whispered from mouth to mouth, and at Court it seemed to me that people "gave each other away" with a freedom quite unknown elsewhere. In no place was silence of such pure gold as in that centre of gossip where the very emptiness and want of intellectuality in the air made the discussion of other people's sayings and ideas of quite an exaggerated importance. Even the Empress herself noticed this one day and complained of it.

"I cannot make the merest idle remark," she said, "as to what I like or dislike, just perhaps when I am in a passing mood, but everybody seizes on it as an expression of opinion and it is quoted everywhere. I am really frightened to say anything for fear of the unnecessary importance given to my remarks. If I say that I think I would perhaps like to do a thing, then it is as though I had actually given an order to have it done."

Then she turned to me and said laughingly, "I know now how your English king felt when he expressed a hasty desire to get rid of Becket, and found to his surprise that he had been taken at his word."

Once when one of the Court gentlemen was chatting informally with some of the ladies in their sitting-room, he referred to Elinor d'Olbreuse, that lovely young French lady of inferior birth whom a certain German, Duke George of Zell, took to wife and who was the ancestress of Queen Victoria, the Kaiser, and several other of the crowned heads of Europe.

The Emperor, whose ideas on the divinity of kings are not so self-evident to his subjects as they are to himself, had been discussing at table his illustrious ancestors, and was highly amused because one of the ladies of the Court had laid claim to one of his forefathers as also her own, a highly probable and easily proved fact. But it had appeared extraordinarily laughable to the Emperor.

"I suppose we must call each other 'dear cousin' in future," he had said.

"I should have liked to remind him of Elinor d'Olbreuse," said the Count.

"He probably does not know about her," remarked some one else who was present.

"Oh, he knows," was the answer, "but he ignores; he does not allow himself to believe it. He only accepts as facts those things which he desires to be true. The idea that the blood of a French dancer runs in his veins would be highly unpleasing."

"But," objected some one else, "every royal family has large mixtures of plebeian blood if one goes far enough back. In mediaeval times kings often took wives without regard to their birth."

"Quite true. But the Emperor shuts his eyes to facts. He likes to believe that the Hohenzollerns descended straight from heaven."

As is well known, the Emperor has been the means of bringing to light upon the stage of the Berlin Opera many musical works which would have been better left in oblivion. The Berlin public steadily refuse to go and listen to them, but, nothing daunted by his ill-success, the Emperor hopes that future generations will endorse his taste.

Once, when His Majesty was very much occupied with the rehearsals for "Der lange Kerl," an opera which no musical critic in Berlin deigned to notice, he talked volubly at table of another work written by one of his aides-de-camp who was a man of educated musical taste and a very good performer on various instruments. The Intendant of the Opera House had spoken very favourably of the work, and the author asked to be allowed to play some extracts from it to the Kaiser, who, however, as he told the assembled table, refused to offer any hope that it would ever be performed in public, his chief objection to it being that it was "so strongly reminiscent of Wagner."

"Well," whispered the officer sitting next to me, "that can never be said of the opera in which His Majesty is at present interested."

William's belief in his own ability as a discoverer of musical talent was deplorable in many respects. It effectually prevented any real modern masterpieces

from appearing for the first time in Berlin, and continually plunged the unfortunate Intendant of the Opera into terrible expenses for new costumes and scenery, for works which were sheer failures both from a financial and artistic point of view.

The Emperor was very optimistic in character, and could always persuade himself that what he wished to be would be.

That his early English associations had given him a taste for English life and a love of English literature is true, but he was essentially un-English in his mode of thought, the inner meaning of our English spirit was eternally a sealed book to him. English ideas of liberty were to him ridiculous, and our English public-school life, " where you devote all your energies to games," was in his idea just a foolish waste of time. The manliness and self-reliance, the sense of responsibility, all the better features of a system with many imperfections, altogether escaped him. This is hardly to be wondered at, for it has escaped a good many other Germans; and when it is considered that as a child the then young Prince William was given over at a very early age into the hands of German tutors, all anxious to eradicate in him the last drop of English blood; that England's weaknesses rather than her strong points were insisted upon; that his grandfather, the old Kaiser, had a passionate love of this his first grandson, and that there was, as is so often the case, more sympathy between the old man and the boy than between the latter and his parents, one sees how

unlikely it was, in spite of his frequent visits to "Grandmamma at Windsor," where he met numerous youthful uncles, that he should grow up with anything but a superficial though wide knowledge of the British spirit.

He was very fond of talking about Windsor, and what he appeared to like in his visits to England was the simplicity, combined with the unconscious effortless ease and comfort, which is a part of English life. Perhaps only those who know the country life of Germany can properly appreciate that of England.

The Emperor's somewhat unrestrained admiration of this phase of English existence was always heard somewhat resentfully by his Court. They did not like their Sovereign's outspoken praise of other ways of living than of theirs in the Fatherland, and his efforts to introduce them into the social life of Germany were met with a sturdy, if tacit, opposition. All ideas of luxury were supposed to be "English," while simplicity and economy were *echt Deutsch.*

The Emperor's character always appeared to me in the light of a misdirected force. It was like lightning, liable to strike anywhere at random and do incalculable mischief, when it might have been, like a controlled current of electricity, utilized for splendid purposes. In spite of his strength of will, his self-assurance and vanity made him peculiarly vulnerable to the influence of clever, unscrupulous people who knew how to use these weaknesses of his for the furtherance of their own purposes.

The Emperor's great desire was to see Germany advance in influence and power, and his peculiar transparency of mind allowed every one to see that he clearly believed it was owing to his own personal efforts that the progress of his country was due. He reminded one of the fly on the wheel who believes that he makes it go round.

The Emperor's custom of "critique" after a military review, when he made a speech to the assembled generals telling them what was right and wrong in the manœuvres, was, generally speaking, much ridiculed among military circles. They listened to it, however, with exemplary outward respect and inward boredom and contempt. They attached no value whatever to His Majesty's remarks.

The Emperor possesses an indomitable will joined to a firm belief in his destiny as the guide of his people. His love of the picturesque and dramatic he employs sometimes to good purpose, while at others he uses it only to draw ridicule upon himself. He believes in impressing his people by outward show, and if he thinks they cannot see the manifest advantages of his rule, takes pains that they shall be suitably instructed in it. He believes in winning the hearts of the rising generation, and shows himself as often as he can to the enthusiastic youth of his capital, granting them frequent holidays.

That he spares no trouble to forward, that he believes himself to be indispensable to the success of every national effort, of whatever kind, is a principle of his

character. At Frankfort, where there was a three days' musical contest, he and his consort were present the greater part of the time.

"We heard one song no less than thirty-five times," complained the poor tired Empress, who makes no pretensions to being musical.

But William decided as to which was the best choir and handed them the prize, quite undeterred by his utter lack of technical knowledge.

Once and only once I have seen the Emperor conducting a band, or, more strictly speaking, "beating the air"; but the faces of the performers were the most interesting part of the spectacle.

Some of the sons of the Emperor have inherited more than others the belief that what they do is admirable. One of them of certain mediocre artistic tastes had a mania for making crude and feeble sketches and presenting them, with doubtless kind intentions, to any lady or gentleman whom he thought fit to honour.

"What a pity," sighed one of the ladies of the Court, looking through her pince-nez at one of these masterpieces which the Royal artist had just thrust into her hand, "what a pity that our young Princes think so much of everything they do themselves. They never seem to compare it with what others do, but believe it to be admirable because they did it."

"Ah," some one made answer, "but that is a well-known Hohenzollern trait of character, the belief that what they do is intrinsically superior to what others

can do. They think that they can accomplish without pains what others achieve by endless hard work."

And it was a continual surprise how little sense of proportion the family had in measuring the qualities of their own performances in the realms of art, seeming to look upon a taste for painting, music, or literature as in itself a qualification, and altogether ignoring the necessity of training and continuous application.

Though independent and unconventional—I will not say original—in his mode of thought, the Emperor is prone to resent a similar independence in others if it opposes his own cherished ideas and opinions. He imagines himself to be more liberal-minded than he really is, and has a marvellous capacity for assimilating, for a short time only, the spirit of any book he has read, the ideas of any person he has met, which for the time impress him with their truth or strike his imagination. He has a phenomenal memory for facts and a talent for seizing the most interesting—not necessarily the most important—points of any subject under discussion. But his thought is, unfortunately, essentially superficial and his deductions often glaringly false.

When Moltke observed that "It is a pious and patriotic duty never to disturb the prestige which connects the glory of our army with certain high personages," he made a remark which echoes in the breast of every loyal German subject.

"*Er is doch der Kaiser*"—"But he is the Emperor." This is the answer almost invariably heard at any

attempt to criticize the actions of the Imperial master of Germany.

Doubtless the comparative newness of the German Empire, the conflicting temperaments and ideals of the various states which compose it, the past wars between them which have left their usual aftermath of bitterness, have created among responsible people the feeling of accomplishing " a pious and patriotic duty " when they allow their ruler to wear the laurels earned by humbler men, to place to his account the rich result of the work and self-sacrifice of others. It appeared to me, in those days when I lived in Germany, to be a fine and estimable trait in the German character.

CHAPTER X

FREDERICK THE GREAT AND HIS FATHER

IT is difficult for English people to realize with what passionate enthusiasm and full consciousness of its value as an inspiration for the present and future times, the teaching of history is carried out in Germany. None of the judicial calm and tepid praise of the heroes and empire-builders of the past, which pervades our own school-books, is to be found in the histories supplied to German schools. They are written with the obvious and praiseworthy idea of arousing in the growing generation the desire to carry on the work begun by men of a past age, and especially are they written with the view of convincing them that without the God-given blessing of the Hohenzollern race on the Prussian throne none of the past glories of the German race would have been possible.

"Oh yes, you are right in England to be democratic. With you it is the people who have done everything, with us in Germany it is our rulers who have done all, that is why we look to the Kaiser for a lead. In England your King has no power, you are practically a republic. Here the Kaiser is the supreme power. Our people

have no capacity for rule. It would be nothing but confusion and jangling if the power were not in one hand. We do not understand here what you call party government and calling each other disagreeable names at elections. We should not like it. We prefer our own methods. The Socialists? Oh, of course, the Socialists are all right too. They voice the wrongs of the people and give an impression that they are of importance. The Socialist vote? Well, it may be increasing, but after all the power—the real power—it all lies in the throne—in the Emperor's hands—the Socialists don't really count as much as they appear to do."

The speaker was a rather cynical, middle-aged man, holding a small office at Court, with whom I frequently found myself falling into interesting political discussions in which we invariably disagreed as to ultimate issues, but he only echoed what every one else said when he remarked that in Germany the people had, historically, done nothing, the rulers everything. I learned to recognize it as one of the stereotyped phrases which one encounters with rather irritating persistence in Germany. It is infinitely tedious to meet in Pomerania with the very same idea, clothed in the same words, and uttered with the same intonation and expression of countenance which one has already heard in Hanover and in South Germany, especially if there are sufficient reasons for doubting its absolute accuracy.

"But," I objected one day, not altogether in a pure spirit of obstinacy, "I do not think that this is true.

The German people have always shown as much initiative as those of other nations, but the rulers have invariably got the credit. There was the War of Liberation, for example, when Prussia was crushed under Napoleon. It was the people, not the Prussian King, who made the first effort at independence. There were splendid patriots and leaders among the people. What about Scharnhorst and Stein and the *Tugend-Bund*? The King did nothing then—the people everything—it was only later on that the King was roused by the efforts of the people."

The man—he was a schoolmaster this time—looked positively uncomfortable and nonplussed. He was evidently unused to any other point of view than the one indicated; he hesitated and perpended.

"Of course, Queen Louise made up a good deal for her husband's shortcomings," I continued, "but her efforts would have been in vain without the help of the people."

"Oh yes," he said, his face brightening. "Yes, you see, it was Queen Louise who saved Prussia." He was obviously relieved to be able to find that after all it was a Royalty who had come to the rescue.

"But Scharnhorst," I urged, "he was the son of a farmer, wasn't he? Not even of Prussian birth but a Hanoverian. He reformed the army which afterwards beat Napoleon—and Stein? It was because he saw that the peasants were too much ground down, that the Prussian people had no liberty under their rulers, were

driven to fight without any enthusiasm for their cause——"

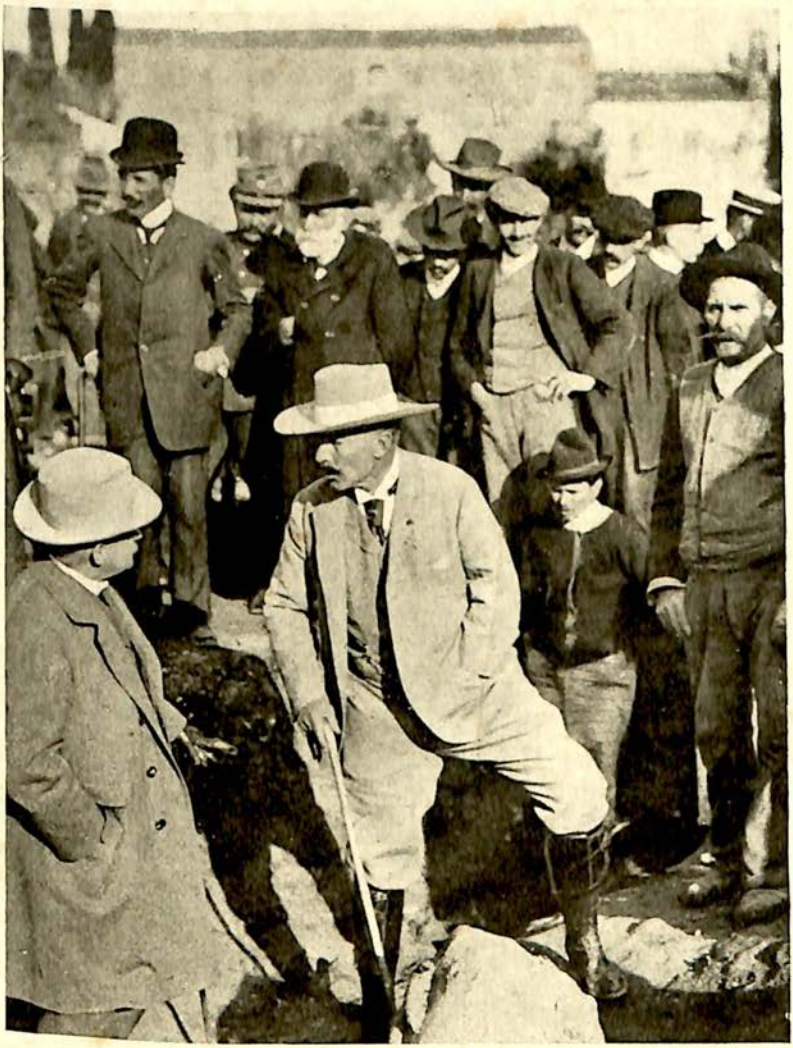
Here the schoolmaster looked uncomfortable and unhappy; he did not know that I had been reading up about Stein.

"That was the reason," I continued implacably, "of Napoleon's success, but as soon as Stein was given a free hand he liberated the people from serfdom and things went better. It was he who laid the foundations of the future greatness of Prussia."

The schoolmaster laughed and abandoned further argument, remarking that he saw I was *höchst demokratisch*, which he appeared to find highly amusing in anyone living at the Prussian Court.

I have already said that Carlyle's "History of Frederick the Great" was highly flattering to German susceptibilities, and all the officers with whom I discussed it (I never yet met with one who had read it in the original and very few in the German translation) were especially grateful to Carlyle for having discovered the virtues of the father of Frederick the Great, whom, in spite of the approving things said about him by his biographer, I always maintained to be a most disagreeable, brow-beating, merely brutal person who had tried to stifle rather than to develop the best qualities of his son, and with the greatest difficulty been restrained from ordering his execution.

Every Prussian officer, every Prussian schoolmaster I ever met, invariably maintained, with all the force of



WILLIAM II IN CORFU, SHOWING COUNT BULOW THE REMAINS OF A RECENTLY-DISCOVERED ANCIENT GREEK TEMPLE

soul and body at his command, that the military capacity, the strength of will, tenacity of purpose and far-sighted sagacity and splendid statesmanship of Frederick the Great were the direct fruits of his father's harsh treatment, and would never have ripened to ultimate maturity if those other less desirable traits of character, his tastes for French literature, French dress, French music and musicians, French wigs and amusements had not been stamped upon in early youth by his heavy-footed parent; if in childhood and youth his spirit had not been crushed, broken indeed, by constant grinding military discipline, by the continual performance of irksome unnecessary tasks, by separation from the society of those he loved. The stern, relentless subordination to the grim purpose and reality of life of all childish dreams, desires, and yearnings, is still exacted by the Prussian military martinet, who believes that in no other way can a boy be made into a satisfactory soldier.

So the methods of that inflexible arbitrarily despotic personage of Spartan habits, Frederick William I, the famous father of his more famous son, Frederick the Great, who long ago laid down the lines on which all Hohenzollern Princes should be educated, are still pursued in Germany.

Carlyle describes this Prussian King, grandson of the Great Elector, with his "rather copious cheeks and jaws; nose smallish, inclined to be stumpy"; as he strides along in his blue military coat, buff waistcoat and breeches, and white linen gaiters, carrying in his hand

the thick bamboo cane which he does not hesitate to lay on anyone—wife, children, subjects—who incurs his displeasure. A very intolerant, explosive personage, with strong hatreds and uncontrollable impulses, driving by the force of his personality all the thousand feebler spirits like chaff before the wind.

Although never able to spell nor express himself correctly—spelling was probably to him one of those purely ornamental accomplishments for which he had no use—he had decided views on education, which he committed to paper voluminously for the guidance of his son's tutors. When little Fritz, the future Frederick the Great, had reached the age of seven, he was taken out of the hands of the womenfolk, away from his beloved French governess who had found him "an angel for disposition and a marvel in learning," from the society of his little sisters, and given over to the care of three military gentlemen—one Duhan, the practical teacher; the other two officers of high rank who have been in many wars and had a good deal of useful experience of life—men whom the little boy grows very fond of as time goes on, continuing to show marks of his esteem in after years. Their general instructions are "to infuse useful knowledge, reject useless, and wind up the whole into a military finish." On week-days the little Prince is to be called at six—no loitering in bed allowed, but briskly and at once get up; say his prayers "so as all in the room may hear him, then as quickly as possible wash himself (but not with soap) and

dress, he shall take breakfast while his hair is being combed and queued (not yet powdered) so that both jobs go on at once, and all this shall be ended before "half-past six." Economy of time loomed large in Frederick William's scheme of education: "Accustom him to get in and out of his clothes as fast as humanly possible," yet he shall by no means be slovenly. "Let him learn to put his clothes on and off by himself, and to be clean and neat, and not so dirty." After the toilette is finished, prayers are read from half-past six to seven, "at which all the servants must be present." At seven begins a history lesson which lasts till nine; then arrives a clerical gentleman from Berlin (twice a week) and teaches little Fritz the Christian religion till a quarter to eleven, when he is released to wash his hands (this time with soap), have his hair powdered, put on his little coat—he has been wearing a short dressing-gown till now—and come to the King his father about eleven. With him he remains, walking, riding, and dining, till two, when—His Majesty at that time being slumberous—Fritz is sent back to his tutors, and lessons begin again. Maps and geography this time, with an account of all the European kingdoms, from two to three; then Duhan for the next hour treats of morality, and from four to five German writing is practised "to see that he gets a good style," which, inheriting the paternal disability, he never does. At five Fritz shall wash his hands, "and divert himself in the air, not in his room, do what he likes if it is not against

God." Sometimes he has ciphering and writing of French letters, and though it is reported that the little Crown Prince learned with extraordinary rapidity, yet spelling, punctuation—he scatters commas "as if," says Carlyle, "they were shaken out of a pepper-box upon his page"—and the higher mysteries of grammar were to him ever unachievable.

Papa takes him on his annual reviews, on his hunts, which the little Prince detests, finding no pleasure in shooting partridges and boar-baiting, "with," as he remarks, "such an expenditure of industry and damage to seed-fields." The boy would prefer to play the flute which Rentzel, his drill-sergeant, has taught him, or spend a little time with his mamma or his beloved Wilhelmina, the bright, witty sister—throughout his life the one woman possessing his entire confidence and esteem.

At nine years of age the little Prince—to encourage his military tastes, not yet strikingly in evidence—has a miniature company of schoolboys, a hundred and ten strong, with whom he is daily drilled, and a small arsenal is made and mounted for him, and he learns to fire off exceedingly small brass ordnance. From the age of ten he is a full-fledged soldier, and studies more and more fortification and artillery—Latin he is spared as being of the useless lumber of accomplishments—of no practical service to any man,—but more and more shall he learn geography, history, "with considerations made upon the causes of events," and frugality, activity, exactitude are to be hourly inculcated. Until he is

seventeen his pocket-money is about eighteenpence a month, while incidental expenses for hair-tape, for mending the flute, for tips to housemaids and postilions, for collections at church, averaged £3 10s. 0d.—not a large amount for the disbursements of the heir to the throne.

Fritz seems to have been fairly happy over his studies. Duhan was a sensible man who had a knack of softening the rigours of existence; but in religion, the dreary catechisms and soul-drillings of two clerical gentlemen who try to instil their dark doctrines into the bright young boy result only in a sense of weariness and stupidity.

As might be expected, things forbidden become alluring. Latin appears a most desirable language, and is being surreptitiously acquired after a fashion, till one fine day Papa enters unexpectedly and, flourishing his redoubtable cane, sends off the terrified teacher and finishes the Latin for that time.

Unfortunately the tastes of young Fritz for Latin, music, French wigs, and finery begin to be a sad torment to his Prussian Majesty, who fears that the future of his kingdom is in the hands of a ne'er-do-weel. His treatment of his son grows harsher and more peremptory, and the Prince is given constant military duty—imprisoned in a pipe-clay element, a prey to vacancy, tedium, and longings, while in the background looms ever darker the shadow of his father's displeasure. He sends a humble petition begging his "dear Papa's forgiveness,"

pleading that the "cruel hatred of himself which he perceives in all his Papa's actions may cease." The stern parent, quite undisarmed by the submissive tone of the letter, seems, on the contrary, to have been lashed by its docility into fresh fury, and in very incoherent ill-spelt German sends his son a raging answer in which he upbraids him for being an "*efeminierter Kerl*" who has no human inclinations, who is not ashamed not to be able to ride or shoot, and is also dirty in his person (*malpropre an seinem Leibe*) and "curls his hair like a fool, instead of cutting it, all of which I have spoken of thousands of times, but all in vain, and there is no improvement in anything. Besides that, proud as Lucifer, speaks with nobody except a few, and pulls faces like a fool, does my will in nothing except by force, —nothing from love, and has no desire to do anything but follow his own desires—nothing except what is useless. This is the answer."

Can we not see the choleric Papa flinging himself in a fury into his hard wooden chair—for cushions and carpets and such dust-holding furniture he will not suffer—seizing a goose-quill and dashing off these lines to the boy anxiously waiting at Potsdam for ever so little sign of relenting on his father's part. Meantime the Crown Prince begins to be known for his wit, his literary tastes, his frank, ingenuous ways, but no one dare praise him for these things in the hearing of the stern rhadamanthine parent who presently, under the stirring preaching of a certain divine, develops a quaint

religious enthusiasm and contemplates retirement from the world of politics and state, proposing to manage his farm by the aid of his wife and daughters, one of whom is to mend the linen while another, "who is miserly," is to keep charge of the stores, and Charlotte, aged twelve, "shall go to market and buy our provisions"—idyllic occupations for future Queens. The religious mood, having wrought its allotted *quantum* of discomfort to family and Court, passed, and the psalm-singing and sermons reassumed normal proportions. All readers of history know of the unhappy years for the Crown Prince that followed, of the thwarted marriage with his English cousin, of the brutal blows and ill-treatment which goaded him to his ill-advised attempted flight to England, of his imprisonment, of the execution under his prison windows of his friend Katte, of his own danger of a similar fate—such was his father's uncontrollable fury—of his fifteen weary months of expiation in Kustrin, where, deprived of his uniform as unworthy to wear it, he is made to study economics and agriculture, and expected to show, by abject submission, his penitence for past misdeeds. By degrees he manages to obtain some amelioration of his lot, his beloved flute is smuggled in to him, also his French books, and he receives clandestine letters from Mamma and Wilhemina. To conciliate his father, he consents to marry a woman he does not love, and though making an honourable effort to live happily with her, in a few years, wearied with her insufferable insipidities, gives up the useless struggle and leaves her

alone to her trivial existence. The youthful days of the greatest of Prussian kings is one long tragedy which overshadows the rest of his life with its bitter memories.

"My youth," he writes in after years, "was a school of suffering"; and "Religion and Love belong above all things to the upbringing of Princes."

I once accompanied the Empress and the ladies of the Court to Königs-Wusterhausen, the small, dreary, ugly, inconvenient Schloss to which Frederick William I was wont to retire from time to time from Berlin—distant some twenty miles—together with his wife, Sophie Charlotte, a daughter of George I of England and Hanover, and his family of ten children. The King and Queen of Prussia had had fourteen, but three little princes and one princess were not able to survive the strange treatment of the children of those days. The eldest daughter, afterwards Wilhelmina of Bayreuth, wrote the famous "Memoirs," which depict in no dubious fashion the severity and brutality of her Royal father, not shrinking even from accusing him, doubtless with perfect truth—in spite of Carlyle's scepticism on the subject—of throwing the dinner plates at his wife and children when, as frequently happened, their conduct was displeasing to him. That on two occasions he was with difficulty restrained from taking the life of his afterwards famous son, Frederick the Great, is a well-known historical fact, and that he indulged in fits of brutal savagery in which those nearest to him were the victims of his unrestrained anger is also not to be denied.

Of his love of economy, especially other people's economies, his hatred of outside parade and show, his delight in savage and degrading sport, and his selfish desire for his own comfort regardless of that of his family, there is ample evidence. He was by no means a lovable personality, but since Carlyle wrote his famous book he has been held up to the admiration of the German people as an example worthy to be followed, and his treatment of his children is not only condoned but commended as the only suitable method of dealing with the rising generation if it is desired to develop in them the strength of mind, the courage, and iron determination which it is desirable to see in every son of the Fatherland. So that Frederick William I has been raised on to a fairly high pedestal as a national hero, and his well-known partiality for extremely tall soldiers, which he obtained by many nefarious and cruel methods, has been regarded in the light of pure military zeal for the needs of the army.

On this occasion of my visit to Wusterhausen, I was naturally very keenly interested in this little hunting-castle, which has been left practically untouched since those days, one hundred and seventy-five years ago, when the King, after spending his last shooting season there somewhat dismally, chained by illness to his bed, finally quitted it for ever, returning to Berlin for the few remaining months of his life.

It looked, even on that pleasant sunny afternoon, when the flat meadows around it, the woods on the

horizon, lay bathed in alternate light and shadow, a rather dismal place, thickly overgrown with the trees planted in the courtyard where the old monarch loved to sit by the fountain and smoke with his counsellors, the old Dessauer, Grumkow, and others. The branches have grown close to the windows and intercept the light and air. Inside, it was dark and dull and melancholy, as uninhabited rooms forlorn of human intercourse are apt to look. The furniture was stiff, solid, and uncomfortable. There were none of the beautiful French sideboards and couches which are to be seen in the palaces of Potsdam and Berlin. One chair was shown to us in which the King was accustomed to sleep when troubled with gout and unable to rest in bed. There was also the *Roll-Stuhl*, in which he was wheeled about from room to room.

On the wall hung various oil-paintings, the products of the King's brush, portraits of unfortunate gentlemen-in-waiting whom one could imagine tremblingly sitting to the Royal limner. If one may judge by the expression of their faces they found it a painful ordeal. The quality of the artistic talent of Frederick William was of a similar kind to that with which we are familiar in signboards of public-houses. It was direct and naïve as that of a schoolboy, and ignored both the rules of perspective and the laws of light and shade. But much may be excused of an art exercised chiefly as a diversion from the sufferings occasioned by frequent attacks of gout. On the back of one of the paintings is inscribed in the

King's handwriting, "Painted in torment. June 14, 1730."

One lady who had accompanied the Empress—she was not one of the regular suite, but had formerly, before her marriage, held a position at Court—was full of admiration of the "wonderful gift," as she called it, of the Prussian King, and professed to find in the wooden features and queerly daubed periwigs of the portraits some undeveloped mine of artistic wealth.

"But, Gräfin," remonstrated the Empress, who, not having been born a Hohenzollern and a Prussian, viewed the pictures with unprejudiced eyes, "they are really frightful. Of course when anyone suffers from gout he can be allowed to do anything that would keep him in a comparatively good temper, but I never heard of anyone admiring the pictures as works of art."

The Empress, ushered by the Kastellan, entered another room accompanied by most of the suite, but the lady who had praised the paintings lingered behind with me.

"I don't care what the Empress says," she remarked rebelliously, laying the picture down again on the table—it was small in size, painted on a wooden panel—"I find it *ganz nett.*"

"Quite nice," I echoed. "One is glad to find him capable of anything so human as a taste for painting bad pictures, he who was so set on people never doing anything that was not of direct use to the State, only I can't understand how he could then refuse to let his son—

poor, unfortunate Frederick—learn to play the flute. He appeared to thwart his children and indulge himself."

"Ah, but all that harshness and severity—see what it did for Frederick!" Here she closed her hand tightly together, making it into a fist and shaking it slightly. "It was that that made him great, that gave him——"

"Oh, how can you say that," I interposed, "when you can read in every line of Frederick's letters which he wrote when he grew older how he deplored that his childhood and youth had been so maimed and crushed by the lack of sympathy and affection?"

"No, indeed, he would have grown up just a foolish, flute-playing, frivolous good-for-nothing," continued the Countess, "if it had not been for his father's firmness and determination to make him a good soldier."

"Yes, I know, always drilling and pipeclay," I interposed; "enough to make him detest the army—he did detest it, he says so himself—anybody would do when they had to grind at it from morning till night as he did—all the machine-made, all the soul-destroying part!"

The Countess laughed. She was a kind-hearted soul, incapable of anything but goodness and charity to others, but she was firmly convinced of the virtues of unmitigated harshness in developing the correct military spirit. Had it not led to the rise of Prussia among European States, to all the glory that followed?

Every German child is taught the same thing, every Prussian prince is at the present day educated much on the same lines as was Frederick the Great himself, taken away from feminine ministrations at the age of seven, given into the hands of a young officer whose business it is to bring him up under strict military tutelage. His tender plastic mind, at the most impressionable, most susceptible age, is henceforth chiefly surrounded by martial influences, is encouraged above all things to believe that the most honourable, the most necessary career for him is that of a soldier.

Many tragedies might be revealed of the results of this implacable law of the House of Hohenzollern, of the fights and struggles of parents against the influence or the methods of the military governor. There is no more fruitful cause of domestic discomfort in royal families than this one.

I remember a family, a distant connexion of the Emperor, in whom the quarrels and disputes between the governor of the young princes and their parents were never-ceasing, and often, to outsiders, of an extremely petty and vindictive nature. One heard continually of the extraordinary subjects of dispute and the constant fighting that took place between the governor, determined to bring up his princes in the good old-fashioned Spartan method, and the parents, especially the mother, who was imbued with the idea that her children were her own, and should be brought up as she considered best. She had been much in

England and encouraged her children to practise every kind of English sport in which she herself took part.

But the military governor knew nothing of English sport, and found that his two princes were lamentably backward in their studies, for they were not gifted with the type of brain which acquires book-learning with facility. In fact, for their ages they were much below the standard to which all German children must attain or suffer much unhappiness. There is nothing in Germany which is so pitiable as a boy—especially if he happens to be a prince—who is not gifted with a capacity for book-learning. No matter what other qualifications of mind and body he may possess, if he cannot learn what his instructors have decided that he must learn, he will suffer intolerably, he will be deprived of most of his few hours of recreation, and made to feel that he is indelibly disgracing himself. His life will be a misery and he will be treated as an unworthy outcast.

The military governor was a martinet of the first water. He believed the "English sports" were the cause of the backwardness of his princes, and forthwith he banished the hockey sticks, the footballs, the cricket bats—all those mysterious implements which he regarded with ill-concealed dislike. With all the zeal of youth and complete ignorance of the mental and physical needs of children he set himself to drag the young minds committed to his charge, willingly or unwillingly, along the path of knowledge. He himself gave no lessons,

but he arranged the hours of study, and engaged the tutors.

Long hours of unrelieved weariness stretched before the boys, who speedily lost any small interest which they had ever had in their lessons.

But as no success followed his efforts, the princes remaining just as impermeable to mathematical and historical facts as they had been before, the indefatigable governor determined that they should be altogether removed from the sphere of home influence, which he decided—perhaps with some reason—was not good for them, and the boys were sent, always accompanied by their governor, to a *Kadetten-Anstalt*, or military school, where the discipline is very strict and the life very hard-working and strenuous. The society of other boys was of great benefit in many directions but failed altogether as a stimulus to improved zeal in the matter of study. The princes were not lazy, they worked hard but accomplished little. Their efforts were not guided by any innate intelligence, and—the chief asset for children in the acquisition of learning—a good memory was one of the qualities in which they were conspicuously deficient.

"They can't remember anything—not the date of the Silesian wars, nor the Latin declensions, nor how much seven times five is!" I once heard the irate governor declaim to a colleague.

His efforts in one direction being thwarted, he determined to strip the princes of all life's redundancies and to try if the Spartan severity and simplicity which in

his opinion had done so much to develop Frederick's character would not achieve similar results if applied in the case of his two princes. So he cut off *Süssigkciten* of all kinds, meaning anything in the way of puddings or sweets at dinner, encouraging the poor little boys to refuse the tempting creams and *Schokoladen-brei* which were served at their parents' table when they came home on week-end visits, and he set his face relentlessly against the superfluities of existence, among which he classed above all things dressing-gowns.

"Dressing-gowns to Graf Finker are like a red rag to a bull," said one of the ladies attached to this princely household. "He has sent them back again here three times, and the Princess always returns them to the boys, and insists that they shall wear them when they go to the bathroom. Why need they be deprived of the ordinary comforts of existence? What is the harm of dressing-gowns? Our boys are manly and fond of outdoor life. They can beat all the others at games, but just because they are not as clever as some of them he descends to this petty form of persecution, as if it would make any difference."

The battle of the dressing-gowns continued for some time longer, when somebody advanced the argument that Frederick the Great as a boy had always donned a dressing-gown in the mornings up till eleven o'clock, at which time his hair was powdered and he was permitted to exchange his gown for a coat. The governor, when he became aware of this historical fact, which up

to then he had ignored, withdrew any further opposition, and so the matter was settled.

And if Frederick the Great be the accepted model for the masculinity of Germany, Queen Louise afforded a no less excellent standard of various feminine virtues to the girls and women. She it was who defied Napoleon, was reviled and persecuted by him, who fled into exile with her children, and at last stimulated her feeble husband into making a stand against the conqueror.

Perhaps we in England do not realize how intensely has been felt in Germany the disgrace of the time of Napoleon's occupation of their country, how the memory of it—in spite of the victories of 1870–1—still rankles in many a heart. The German does not possess the English knack of forgetting—is not indeed allowed to forget—what his country has once suffered from the invader. The hatred of the French nation in Germany always appeared to me to be kept alive of set purpose—stories of French cruelty and French oppression find place in all the reading-books of the schools. There was never any sign of any attempt at reconciliation, and Goethe's line "*ein echter deutscher Mann mag keinen Franzen leiden*"—"a true German hates a Frenchman"—has been used as the text to many a patriotic sermon. In this connexion I remember a small incident that appears to me rather illuminating. The Emperor's daughter, like every other German child I ever met, had inherited the national dislike of French people, and was not able to imagine the possibility of any

of them possessing a single good quality. It is perhaps the view which most children, those ardent partisans, are likely to take of those who have been enemies of their country, and in Germany it is not considered well to teach children to perceive anything good in a nation which has so often fought against Germany. But when the Princess, an ardent reader of English, had finished Conan Doyle's "Exploits of Brigadier Gerard" she evidently revised some of her impressions of Frenchmen and saw them in a new light, for in a book where she kept a list of the works she had read, and noted her opinion of their contents,—mere crude, childish impressions, but none the less interesting,—she wrote opposite to the title of the above-mentioned work: "In this book, for the first time I can see that Napoleon was very much beloved by his soldiers, and that it is quite possible that there were some quite nice Frenchmen in those days."

Later on, when a French lady was appointed as her governess,—the first Frenchwoman who had been at the Prussian Court since the war of 1870-1,—the Princess, awakened to the privilege of being magnanimous and fair in one's dealings with the hereditary enemy, received her with the greatest interest and friendliness, and speedily fell a victim to the charm and brightness of the lady from France. From that time onwards it was amusing to hear her in her intercourse with other children, with whom she had hitherto been severely Prussian and patriotic, now urging upon them the necessity of admitting that French people were, one

must admit, often extremely charming and beautiful, and that the former idea that the French were without exception hateful and despicable, was one which personal experience showed to be somewhat warped from the truth. The unanimity with which they all agreed that "Mademoiselle" was absolutely delightful, and that they must confess to having met other French people who also conveyed a similar impression, gratified the little Princess extremely.

But it was not only children who cherished past hatreds and memories of old, unhappy, far-off things, and battles long ago, but the older people too—even the old officers who had been through the Franco-Prussian War and might, one would have thought, have felt that they had had their legitimate revenge, were strangely implacable. They never seemed willing to let the wrongs of a past generation sleep, much less die, they were continually goading on the new one, keeping alight the ancient flame. They seemed to be annoyed that France had not been so crushed as they had hoped. The younger officers all believed in the decadence of France as an accomplished fact. One of them I remember well who used to ride with me sometimes. He was attached to the Imperial stables, and being a great talker and very satisfied with himself and his own opinions, he gave me a good deal of insight into the thoughts and ideas of men of his own class.

"France," he declared, one wet and windy day

when we were trotting round the riding-school together, "France as a nation is finished—done with—going downhill every day—that is a well-known fact."

I felt rather surprised, for I had recently been in France and seen a good many evidences of prosperity and industry, and as I knew he was a man who had never been outside Germany, I ventured to dispute what he said. This was some time in the year 1908—six years before the Great War broke out.

"Ah," he said, "France may appear all right on the surface—but she will crumble into dust before long," and he rubbed his fingers together as though he could feel France breaking up in his hand. "Her population grows smaller every year. How can any nation progress if its people are dying out? Here in Germany the population increases every year—every large city has enormous increases—in a short time the Germans will be spreading everywhere and French influence will be shrinking."

He went on for a long time demonstrating that nothing could prevent the absolute wiping out of France from the map of Europe, her complete extinction as a nation.

"I would like," I said, when he had finished, "to ask you your opinion of the future of England?"

"Oh, England!" he said, and turned in his saddle and looked back at me with something mocking and exultant in his tone. "There is a good deal to be said

about England, but I think we have talked enough politics for this afternoon." So we began cantering, and his thoughts about England remained unspoken, though I had no doubt in my mind that they were not favourable to the British Empire.

CHAPTER XI

BERLIN AND POTSDAM

THE most characteristic of German towns, in its modernity, is Berlin, with its wide, well-planned streets of fine houses, and the ceaseless, restless rush of its citizens who lead lives of strenuous work and equally strenuous pleasure. Comparisons are proverbially odious and frequently misleading, and I grew tired of hearing of London and Berlin compared, with great detriment to the former. Berlin is a modern town and her suburbs have sprung up within the last fifty, many of them within the last twenty years, in the dry sandy plain which stretches across Northern Germany. Her inhabitants, being gifted with the foresight which is so pre-eminently typical of the German race, planned their city much as they are planned in Canada and the States. They permitted none of the acres of mean jerry-built streets which are such a pernicious blot on our English towns. This does not mean that there are no jerry-built houses in Berlin, they are there too by the thousand, but their jerryism is of a nobler, more daring type. The universal system of flat-living, in contrast to our English habit of each family demanding

a backyard of its own, permits of the erection of palatial residences with wonderful cement ornamentations and balconies of a size sufficient to accommodate the whole family and the tea-table. We in England are inclined to sneer at what we loosely call "stucco," but it seems to me we have never sufficiently exploited, as have the Germans, the plastic building possibilities of cement, which lends itself so readily to the erection of solid-looking constructions, cool in summer and warm in winter, and capable of being easily and safely heated.

Berlin, it has often been remarked, is not a city that grows upon one; it has no hidden beauties, no unexpected nooks of quiet, old-world buildings; all is blatantly, aggravatingly new and prosperous in appearance. Yet it is not without certain pleasing and even beautiful aspects. Its tree-planted streets, for instance, are charming, as is Tier-Garten—not, as I imagined when I heard the name for the first time, a kind of animal enclosure or Zoological Garden, but an extensive park in the very heart and centre of the city—full of trees, with sheets of water in it, on which the people skate in winter, and row up and down perspiringly in summer, and wide shaded paths and roads where the Emperor rides and walks every day when in residence at his capital. Through its centre runs the chief artery of traffic between the Brandenburger Tor and the thickly-populated suburb of Charlottenburg. It is the pride and the chief place of recreation of the Berliners. All the social life of the town centres round this beauty-spot,

and the wealthiest people live in the streets which surround it.

When the Court was in Berlin there were two places where the Emperor used to ride. One was the Tier-Garten, the other was the Grunewald, the forest which lies on the outskirts of Berlin and joins up with other woods which lie along the road between it and Potsdam. The road between the Royal Schloss and the Grunewald lies through a thickly-populated district, but one of the features of modern Berlin is the provision of excellent riding-roads. Down the historic Linden there is a sandy path on one side of the broad thoroughfare where horsemen can ride from the Castle to the Pariser Platz, lying on one side of the Brandenburger Tor, and on the other side are the various *Reit-Wege* of the Tier-Garten and the splendid tree-shaded triple road of the Charlottenburger Chaussée, driving straight for three miles into the heart of the woodland. Although riding through Berlin was naturally rather a tedious process, owing to numerous intersecting side-streets of slippery asphalt, yet the Emperor invariably went on horseback all the way from his own door and back again, refusing to travel part of the way by automobile, as the Empress invariably did, her horses being sent on in charge of grooms to a certain spot in the forest where she arranged to join the Emperor.

William always appeared in uniform when riding in Berlin, as did the numerous officers of his escort, who were never less than ten or twelve in number. I often

saw them pass in and out through the courtyard of the Schloss that lay beneath my window. They made a delightful break of vivid colour against the dull grey walls, and when they emerged into the big square—the Lust-Garten—outside the Schloss, there was a great gathering of the people from all sides, who, however, were not allowed to encroach upon the square until the Emperor and his suite had passed. It was a very picturesque sight. The enormous pile of the grey, dingy buildings of the big Palace, flanked on one side by the equestrian statue of the Emperor William and on the other by the new Cathedral of Berlin, and the spacious empty square across which the group of riders moved among the cheers and wavings of the people. The police were very strict in not allowing anyone to cross the square, and if any of the ladies of the Schloss had been out shopping on foot, they were not permitted to re-enter the Schloss unless they had been careful to take with them their *Einlass Karte,* with which every member of the Royal household was furnished—orange colour for *Herrschaften* and blue for *Dienerschaft.* I always carried mine in my purse, for it was not the least use to reply to the burly *Dienstmann's* question, "Why do you want to go into the Schloss?" "Because I live there."

He would shake his head dubiously and after reflection would say roughly—all Berlin policemen of that time had a very disagreeable manner of addressing the public —"That can be, but how am I to know it?"

But the production of the little yellow card always

softened the man's humour. He would bow deeply, a smile percolated through the grimness of his expression, he called me "Meine Dame" and waved his hand gracefully across the square, indicating that I had his full permission to walk over it.

These rides of the Emperor, two or three times a week, through the streets of his capital, mounted on a splendid horse, wearing, as he invariably did in Berlin, Hussar uniform, and surrounded by a glittering retinue, helped to impose his personality upon the people and added very materially to his popularity. His saddle-horses were all tall, big-boned animals, and they were trained with special care, for the Emperor, as is well known, has no power at all in his left arm, although he is able to hold the reins with his left hand. But he has a fairly good seat on horseback, and on those winter afternoons of February and early March, it was one of the sights of Berlin to see his progress back through the streets, along the broad alleys of the Tier-Garten, under the centre arch of the Brandenburger Tor, on each side of which sentries are posted, and up the Linden Avenue, where the windows of the big hotels were packed with foreigners anxious to see the Emperor, and on the pavements the people stood patiently waiting in the cold to see him pass by. The Master of the Horse confided to me his agonies of apprehension on these occasions, and said he had implored His Majesty to give up these rides over the slippery asphalt of the squares, but it was all in vain. The Emperor knew very well the impression

he made on people and believed it well worth the risk. It was a triumphant progress such as he enjoyed. The enthusiastic greetings of the people, the shrill cries of the school children of Berlin, who saw in the figure on the white horse the personification of the glory and might of the German Empire, were wildly enthusiastic. Even democratic Americans who have seen the sight have confessed to feeling strangely moved and stirred at it.

"You know, I felt 'like cheerin' too when I saw William comin' along like that," said one of them to me. "He does understand how to keep the centre of the stage that man, and the sun flashin' on all those swords as they rode, an' the blues and reds of the uniforms! I tell you he's *some* Kaiser, he is. He knows how to dress the part. He's got an instinct for the spectacular. He seizes the imagination. He's *clever*, I tell you, if he *has* done some foolish things. He plays to the gallery, and it's what you've got to do, I guess, nowadays if you want to be a power in politics."

Berlin is a city that has grown up under the Emperor's hand and is stamped everywhere by his tastes. One feature of the new streets which might well be imitated in our own country is the frequency of small, open, tree-shaded spaces furnished with benches, where the poor women and children of the neighbourhood may enjoy the fresh air. In the more recently built quarters of the town, all houses, whether shops, hotels, or private flats, are by law obliged to have three yards of garden frontage, and it is surprising how even bicycles and

ironmongery seen through a frame of climbing plants, roses, or clematis, lose none of their attractiveness to the buyer.

The Emperor's taste in sculpture is, unfortunately, only second rate. He is inevitably attracted in art, whether in painting, sculpture, or music, to the mediocre, so that the statues of Berlin are somewhat of a blot upon the town, though in the summer-time the gleam of their whiteness among the trees of the Sieges-Allée is cool and refreshing. Here are placed all the statues which the Emperor has presented to the town of the kings and electors of the Hohenzollern line. They are, with one or two exceptions, indifferently executed, and in no way to be taken as examples of the best that German sculptors can do. During the first few winters of their introduction to the capital, occasionally some of them when morning dawned were discovered to be minus noses or other necessary features, which had been broken off during the night. These outrages were always attributed by the Emperor to the Socialists, but a young artist of the very "modern" school once told me that he believed the perpetrators to be young art students furious at what they considered to be a crime against German taste.

The Cathedral, erected on the site of the old one on the banks of the Spree opposite to the Royal Castle, is built on a plan approved by the Emperor and has been much criticized. The interior especially strikes one as bare and inartistic in the extreme, and quite

unworthy of a town of the size and wealth of Berlin. It seems to embody the spirit of Lutheranism—plain, unadorned, with no uplifting of the spirit to the worship of an ideal.

The social life of the Berlin metropolis is not what one would expect in the centre of a great empire. The Emperor has in vain tried to give it that nameless something which attracts rank and fashion to such towns as London, Paris, and Vienna. In Berlin you will see neither smartly nor poorly dressed people, no congregating there of the wealthy aristocratic class who take a lead in social life and give a certain glow and form to existence. There is no fashionable time or place for people to walk or drive, and fine equipages, excepting those belonging to the Court, are conspicuous by their absence. The Emperor has from time to time tried in vain to create a fashionable atmosphere, and one season he instituted a *Corso* which was to emulate the afternoon procession of carriages in Hyde Park during the season ; but in spite of the fact that he himself daily drove in the Tier-Garten with his coach-and-four, and his Master of the Horse appeared with another, and all frequenters of Court functions were invited to come with their equipages, the result was a dismal failure.

As one lady remarked to me, "What is the use of the Emperor trying to imitate London ? Your season is in May and June, ours is in January and February—no time for driving slowly up and down and chatting

to one's friends. If we drive at all, we drive in closed carriages wrapped up in furs, and are thankful to get to our journey's end as soon as possible. Even if the weather happens to be fine and bright there is no attraction in the Tier-Garten at this time of year, no flowers, no leaves on the trees."

So the Emperor had reluctantly to renounce his attempt to make a fashionable promenade hour in an unsuitable season.

When he held a Levee—a *Cercle*, as it is called in Berlin—taking place at 9.30 p.m., I would watch the carriages as they came into the courtyard, and slowly ranged themselves row on row to wait for the return of the officers, and never did I in thóse first early years of my residence at Court behold such a collection of wretched equipages. Every last decrepit vehicle which would hold together, every poor, trembling, worn-out horse—the horses of Berlin were a crying scandal and shame to any decent community before the advent of the automobile drove them off the street—was pressed into service, and it was strange to see tall handsome men in brilliant uniforms descending from carriages of the last degree of shabbiness, with drivers who appeared to have made no effort, by a little personal attention to their own toilette or that of the horses, to minimize the depressing effect of their appearance within the precincts of the Royal Castle. Sometimes from the upper landing of the big staircase leading to the "White Hall" I would watch the crowd of officers in full-dress

uniform, conspicuous among them the Cuirassiers of the Guard in their white tunics, wearing high top-boots, mingled with and reflecting in their burnished cuirasses the many-coloured greys, blues, reds, and greens of the surrounding uniforms, infantry and cavalry, which surged up the wide marble staircase. There was an incessant clanking of swords and the queer murmur of blended talk which sounds so strangely when one is above a crowd and can hear no distinct word. It is a noise much more like what we are apt to call the meaningless gabble and chatter of birds and animals than is at all complimentary to our sense of human superiority.

If, after watching the stream of courtiers pass, one stepped to the windows on the opposite side of the corridor and looked out through the dark and dismal night into the dimly-lighted courtyard—for the excellent electric illumination of the Berlin streets had not penetrated to the Castle yard, which was appallingly ill-lit—one could not but be painfully struck by the contrast of row upon row of broken-down animals and men, with their wretched vehicles, all waiting in the bitter sleet. Cabmen's shelters have never been introduced into Berlin, and although there existed a *Tier-Schutz-Verein*, equivalent to our English "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals," its activities never seemed to be very pronounced.

Mr. Richard Thirsk, writing in 1911 his impressions of the population of the rapidly-growing capital of Germany, says of it:

"The majority of the street crowds are peasants who have left the fields and ploughs for the more exhilarating excitements of Berlin, bringing with them to the capital their country manners. They have not yet had time to erect any standard of behaviour."

And it is true that in Berlin more than in any other large German town with which I am acquainted there is a conspicuous lack of that polish and courtesy which is popularly supposed to be acquired where people congregate in large numbers. The shop assistants were distinctly rude in their manners, and it often amused me to note the rapid change from boorishness to servility of the young man or woman behind the counter when they suddenly became aware that a Court carriage was waiting outside for me.

The only smart equipages to be seen in the streets were those from the Royal stables, and every official connected with the Court was allowed the privilege, with certain restrictions, of a carriage and pair for the use of himself and his wife. But the German aristocracy who came to stay in Berlin never brought their own carriages with them, but used the ordinary cabs, such as they were.

The Crown Prince, after his marriage, when he had a fairly large establishment of his own, made a practice of driving about a good deal in his dogcart drawn by four fine brown horses—occasionally he drove a team of seven together—much to the delight of the idlers in Unter den Linden.

But in spite of all the Emperor could do, in spite of

the stir and excitement that agitated the town whenever he was in residence, Berlin always appeared to me a somewhat sordid, dull, and arid place, where existence consisted of a feverish and crowded chase after rather dubious forms of enjoyment. Outside the University there seemed to exist no intellectual circle. People had fashionable crazes for art or for literature. If the Emperor went three times to the exhibition of Old English Masters, all Berlin flocked to see them. The critics, austerely aloof, as they invariably were in their attitude towards any branch of art which received Royal approval, would write severely cutting notices of the "prettiness" of Gainsborough and Reynolds, and the evil effect the exhibition of their pictures—which might be good enough for the poor ignorant English—would have upon the taste of the Berlin public, so easily guided into wrong channels; but there was no body of artists sufficiently strong to overcome the influence of the Emperor's liking and patronage of the mediocre. It was to Munich that young men of power and originality flocked if they desired that appreciation and understanding which is the chief stimulus of genius.

"The Emperor," said an artist to me once, "knows and cares nothing for art. He only likes men who can paint bad historical or military pictures, or portrait painters to whom he can sit for posterity. He could not recognize genius if it came and took him by the hand. He would turn his back on it and run after something clever and commonplace."

He groaned and shook his head as he spoke, and I tried to comfort him by telling him that in London too we had quantities of inartistic masterpieces dotting the streets, and that there was a time when we worshipped Landseer and——

"Ah," he groaned, "your city makes no pretence at being beautiful, but ours is a hollow sham. I go about dreaming of what it might have been, and what it is."

I felt glad that I was not burdened with the artistic temperament to such an acute degree.

But if Berlin bears written largely all over it the impress of the Emperor's influence and personality, it is strange that Potsdam, that quaint old town which is to the German capital as Windsor is to London, has been left practically untouched by him, much to its advantage. The Emperor's palace—the New Palace, as it is called, though built by Frederick the Great—lies about one mile from Potsdam near the large Wildpark or deer-forest, a lovely wilderness of trees where deer roam in large herds and down whose broad avenues of beech and oak the Emperor's daughter rode or drove nearly every day. The Palace is divided from the town of Potsdam by the large park and gardens of Sans Souci, the tiny little palace dedicated to the memory of Frederick, who occupied it in preference to the big building near by. It is the spirit of this king, the spirit of the past, which characterizes the town of Potsdam and stamps it with a charm of its own. It possesses a reserve and a consciousness of bygone glories which

give it an atmosphere of calm dignity not to be found in the newness and blatant prosperity of Berlin.

I remember one of my earliest impressions of Potsdam was the sight of a street in the very heart of the town, bordered on each side with acacia trees for part of its length, and red hawthorn towards the end. The acacia trees with their vivid green foliage were in full bloom, their creamy white flowers hanging in pendent clusters while their delicious scent filled the air, effectually drowning the usual odours of leather, pickled cabbage, and Swiss cheese which hang about most German streets. The deep red of the hawthorn beyond made a beautiful background to the white acacia. For several years, at the season of acacia bloom, I passed often up and down the street so as to enjoy the beautiful sight and scent. Then there came a time when, on my first visit of the year to Potsdam after the return of the Court from Berlin, I turned the well-known corner and found that all the beauty had vanished. They were laying tram lines down the road, and the trees had been cut down.

Some of the Potsdam streets are intersected by narrow canals, chiefly, I suppose, for the purposes of drainage, as nothing in the shape of water-craft is ever seen upon them. Swans glided up and down, and were fed with bread by the idle passer-by, and on Saturdays a fish-market was held all along the edge, where the fish-women sat in big tubs with charcoal braziers in the bottom to keep their feet warm. In other side-

streets a kind of open market was held, and it appeared to me, in view of the bitter weather experienced in the winter-time, that a covered market was one of Potsdam's most urgent necessities.

But the very cobble-stones of Potsdam breathed of past ages. They were the most painful material to walk upon, and had in the principal thoroughfares been replaced by cement; but in the quiet side-streets, with their funny short flights of stone steps, their mansard roofs and somewhat dilapidated stucco Cupids and wreaths of flowers of that Rococo—a variety of the style of Louis Quatorze and Louis Quinze—so much beloved of the old Prussian king, one trod literally the same stones that have been pressed by the feet of Frederick's field-marshals, of the Scotch brothers Keith, of Seydlitz and Zieten. One could imagine the small dried-up figure of Voltaire, the sometime bosom friend and afterwards most waspish enemy of His Prussian Majesty, strolling down the green alleys in his full-bottomed wig and long-skirted coat, chattering volubly in French to Frederick, who, to the regret of modern Prussians, never willingly spoke any other language and detested the German speech, which to him sounded barbarous and only fit for peasants.

Potsdam has always been a considerable military centre, the home of the Life Guards and of the infantry regiments in which the sons of the Kaiser received their first early initiation into military duties. Huge square barracks are built everywhere, often on very ill-chosen

sites, where they block out and spoil much of the scenery.

All through the day military forage-wagons roll through the town, piled up with hay or straw, and other carts loaded with *Commis-brod*, the loaves of soldier's bread, of a peculiar greyish brown texture rather indigestible to ordinary capacities but decidedly satisfying in quality. Bread and cheese and soup, with a little coffee, is the German soldier's chief stand-by. He is not pampered in times of peace.

The Crown Prince has a winter residence in the town of Potsdam itself in the old Stadt-Schloss, as it is called, where he has a suite of apartments, while his chief summer residence is in the outskirts of the town, in the Marble Palace, lent to him by his father the Emperor. The Marble Palace is charmingly situated on the Heiligen See, or Holy Lake, one of the numerous small lakes of the Havel, but it has the disadvantage of many royal palaces, it is very open to the public. The Crown Prince and Princess dislike also to have to live in old-fashioned rooms around which cling so many of those memories of the past that they have become holy relics and may not be modernized without risk of an outcry against the desecration of doing away with a former king's wall-papers. For this reason they were in the earlier years of their married life anxious to build a home of their own, as most of their predecessors had done, and a site in the neighbouring park of Babelsberg, in which stands the queer castellated Schloss of the Old

Emperor William, mentioned in Queen Victoria's diary, was selected and prepared, some thousands of pounds being spent on levelling and preparing it. But for some years before the war broke out it was not proceeded with, much to the Crown Prince's discontentment. Perhaps the Emperor reflected that the already existing quantity of unoccupied Royal castles needed no addition to their number, or the necessary money could not be found; but the young couple still have to content themselves with their Marble Palace, with its somewhat comfortless arrangements and conspicuous lack of bath-rooms and modern conveniences.

"The only thing it's good for is boating or swimming," I once heard the Crown Prince impatiently remark. "You can step out of your drawing-room window into the water if you like; but if you do, you'll have to take a bath immediately after to wash away the Potsdam sewage, a good deal of which is discharged into the lake."

And it had to be admitted that much of the former charm of the Marble Palace had been spoiled by the encroaching villadom of Potsdam and by the erection of barracks "directly opposite the drawing-room windows," as the Empress indignantly remarked.

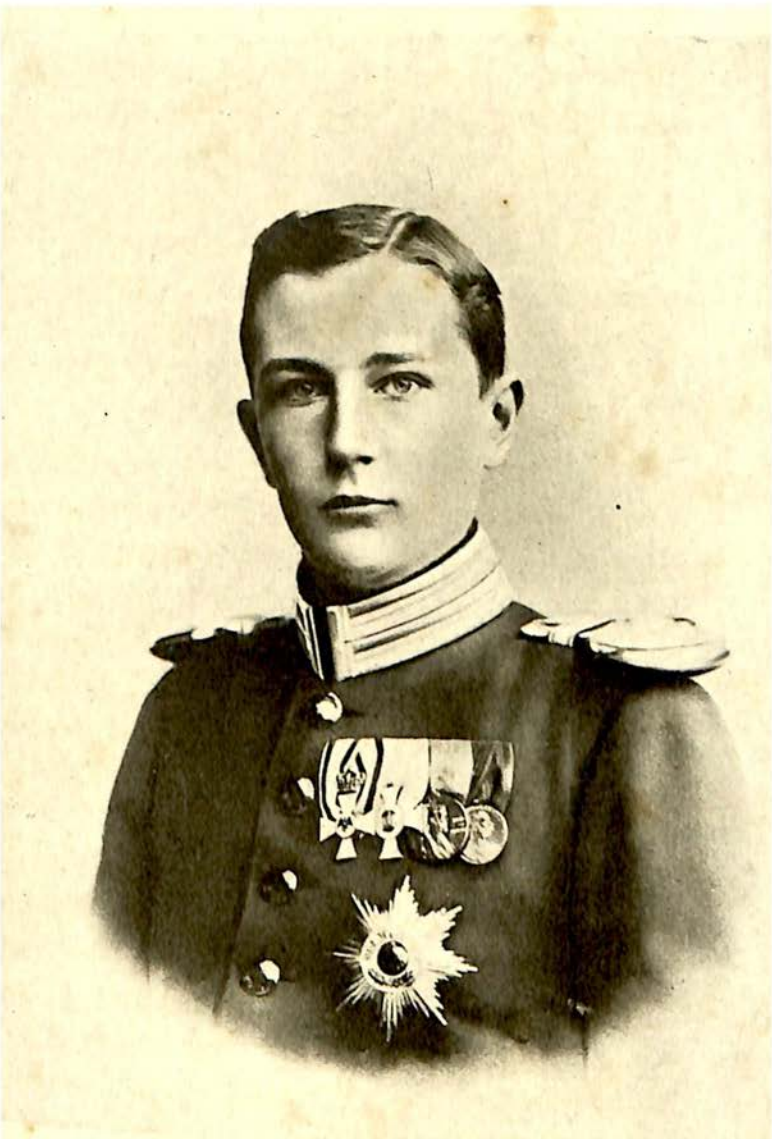
Scattered in the outskirts of the town were several houses belonging to the Crown in which the various morganatic wives or mistresses of dead-and-gone Prussian kings had been formerly installed, among them Villa Ingenheim and Villa Liegnitz, the last one having been given to the morganatic spouse of Frederick

William the Third, who at the age of fifty-four, fourteen years after the death of the admired and unfortunate Queen Louise, married again. His second wife received the title Princess of Liegnitz, and lived here until her death. She was only twenty-four at the time of her marriage.

When the Duchess of Albany and her daughter, now Princess Alexander of Teck, lived in Potsdam for a few months, while the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, the son of the Duchess, was undergoing his military training, the Emperor lent them the Villa Ingenheim, which is very pleasantly situated, the waters of the Havel skirting one side of the garden. It was formerly the house, given to her by the King, of the Countess von Ingenheim—Julie von Voss, married during the life of his legal wife, Princess Louise of Hesse-Darmstadt, and with her consent, to Frederick William II of Prussia. She lived only two years, and was followed by a second "left-handed" wife, also married, like the first, with full ecclesiastical ceremony to the King. When the Duchess quitted the villa, it remained empty for a few years until the marriage of Prince Fritz, the second son of the Kaiser, to Princess Sophie Charlotte of Oldenburg, a niece of the Duchess of Connaught, when it underwent drastic renovations and was given as a home to the young couple. Large stables were built, and the house itself converted from its former modest proportions into an imposing and comfortable building. Princess Fritz, who was an enthusiastic gardener, a taste which is

considered rather peculiar in the Prussian Royal Family, converted the grounds from a wilderness of straggling shrubs and arid gravel spaces into a beautiful rose-embowered paradise, and there used to be a great deal of covert grumbling at Court because the young couple, who had no children, preferred to spend their time in superintending the planting of rhododendron bushes rather than in opening bazaars and performing other public duties. Princess Fritz was, as a matter of fact, much too delicate to undertake a great deal in the way of public work.

I once was sent by the Empress to a charity "five o'clock" given at the Hotel Adlon, which was to be presided over by Prince and Princess Fritz, who had been reluctantly persuaded—it may be commanded—to lend the countenance of their presence to the affair. As I went into the "Adlon," the largest, most fashionable, and most expensive of Berlin hotels, situated on Unter den Linden at the corner of the Pariser Platz and looking on to the Brandenburger Tor, I found at the entrance the usual reception committee, consisting of several very fashionably-dressed ladies, one with a very expensive-looking bouquet obviously intended for Royalty, and two or three gentlemen in faultless morning attire, wearing frock-coats and with shiny top-hats on their heads. A liveried porter was keeping a sharp look-out, and in the big lounge of the hotel a discreet crowd of other expensive-looking people were ranged, all with necks craned towards the door.



PRINCE EITEL FRIEDRICH ("PRINCE FRITZ"), SECOND SON OF THE GERMAN EMPEROR

I went on upstairs with the lady from the Schloss who was my companion, into the tea-room, where little tables were arranged; and while we were consuming our five-mark tea, we became suddenly aware of Prince and Princess Fritz standing in the middle of the big room among the tables looking rather frightened and lost. In a few minutes the isolated members of a very agitated reception committee, which had quite lost its cohesion, hurried past in a straggling line, consternation written large on the features of every individual, and the lady in charge of the bouquet constantly embarrassed through the broad ribbon streamers which tied it catching in people's chairs.

The Prince and Princess had driven up in their automobile to the side entrance of the hotel, whether from accident or design it is difficult to say, but they made no pretence of being pleased to be there, and after the Princess had accepted the bouquet and made a few nervous remarks, they went away again, evidently glad to escape.

The Villa Liegnitz, built close to the gates of Sans Souci, was given to the Kaiser's fourth son, Prince August Wilhelm, "Au-Wi," as he is called by his family, when he married his cousin. The Prince in question has very artistic tastes, which are shared by his wife, a Princess of Schleswig-Holstein, who is a very good amateur artist. When the Villa was to be re-decorated, the young Prince insisted on choosing all the papers and furniture himself. I once drove with the Princess

Victoria Louise, his sister, to the Villa, and the Prince, who was there with his wife,—they were living in Berlin till their new home could be ready for them,—invited us to come and look at the hangings he was choosing, so we went in, and found there the adjutant of the Prince—his military gentleman-in-waiting, who with pocket-book in hand and a very anxious expression of face, was waiting to receive the Prince's commands. I pitied the unfortunate gentleman from the bottom of my heart. He was obviously outraged at having to bend his mind—which was purely military and had no leanings whatever in the direction of applied art—to the question of whether rose-coloured or yellow curtains would be better with certain wall-papers. Frequently invited by the polite Prince to give his opinion, he emphatically washed his hands of any responsibility while making hurried notes of colour and quantities in his pocket-book—notes which, when the princely mind reconsidered things, had invariably to be changed, not once, but many times. We left the three of them, the Prince and his wife still discussing artistic possibilities, the adjutant still writing feverishly, and as we drove away towards Sans Souci, the young Princess with a bewildered look sighed heavily.

"Poor Herr von Roder!" she said pityingly, "I do feel sorry for him. I'm sure he's got everything muddled up. Could you understand what they wanted? I couldn't. I expect he'll have got his blues and greens all in the wrong places."

There were one or two other empty villas, to which the Princess would occasionally drive, stroll round the deserted gardens a-while, and then return. The one with the prettiest garden was the Villa Alexander, once inhabited by a mysterious " uncle " of the Princess, one of those uncles of royalties whose relationship is rather puzzling, especially if one is not conversant with the morganatic family complications. For a long time I was perplexed by the allusions of the Princess to " my cousin von Esmarch " until I discovered that he was the son of an aunt of the Empress who had married a doctor.

The Villa Alexander was a mouldy, decaying kind of house, standing in a lovely position high above the lake. All the plaster was falling from the walls, there were damp stains and splotches on the faded old-fashioned paper that yet clung precariously; leaves drifted into the hall and remained unswept. It had the neglected uncared-for look of places which no longer have human ties.

A much more delightful place was Lindstedt, built in the corner of a field, close to the New Palace. It was, like most of the other villas, in quasi-Italian style, and had been erected by Frederick William IV, a cosy, intimate little house, which he evidently much preferred to the big Palace a few hundred yards away. It still possessed a certain amount of furniture and was in excellent condition, having been kept well warmed and aired. For a short time Prince Joachim had been

installed there with his governor before being sent to Plön, and once for six weeks the little Princess lived in it while her mother was away in Sicily.

It was a time on which she looked back with joy. The pleasure of being able to have a ploughed field almost in front of her window, and to watch the young coveys of partridges running in and out of the growing corn, was something entirely new in her experience. The small salons, with their beautifully-polished parquet floors, opened into each other, with that curious lack of privacy characteristic of houses on the Continent, and as usual there was a complete lack of communicating passages. But the house was bright and sunny, and embowered in roses, and if the sentries posted at the foot of the garden steps—stolid young soldiers who were not much protection—were found to be horribly in the way when the Princess wanted to race about and enjoy herself, they were the only drawback to an otherwise charming existence.

"I like a villa much better than a palace," the Princess remarked once, "they are so much more homely, and they have no state-rooms in them. State-rooms are cold and gloomy and no one is ever happy in them."

CHAPTER XII

GARDENS AND ZEPPELINS

IN view of the avowed love of Nature and outdoor life among the people, I often wondered, when in Germany, at the conspicuous lack of beautiful private gardens to be found in nearly all parts of the Fatherland. Public gardens were as a rule cultivated with knowledge and intelligence, but those belonging to the houses of the country gentry showed none of the loving care and taste which in England we so frequently find lavished on a small garden by people of comparatively slender means.

Once, when the Empress was travelling with her daughter from Rominten to Berlin, she broke her journey on the way, to go and take luncheon with a very wealthy nobleman whose house and estates lay not far from Danzig. The suite travelling with her were naturally included in the party, and I was struck, as we drove up to the house, along a country lane bordered by ploughed fields, through cheering groups of villagers, at the extraordinary badness of the road along which the smart carriages were bumping, and also at the very poor and insignificant entrance to the large solidly-

built Schloss, which had a good deal of architectural pretension, and covered a fair amount of ground. I was continually being assured in Germany, by those natives of the country who had visited England, that the lack of beautiful old country-houses was entirely owing to the Napoleonic invasion; that all the old houses had been gutted and destroyed, together with their valuable contents. This was no doubt to a great extent true, but it hardly altogether excused, I thought, the modern neglect. In Berlin, for example, one noted how ingenious and often successful people were in adding beautiful details to the outsides of their residences, but in the country, where many of the German aristocracy live nearly the whole year round on their estates, there was an obvious lack of interest in the gardens, the grass grew long, the walks were untidy, the bushes unpruned and straggling.

Here in this big country place, where one might have thought that the visit of the Empress would have stimulated everybody to do their best to improve the appearance of the grounds, which were full of beautiful possibilities, stretching away towards lovely glades of woodland and meadow, the grass on the lawn in front of the fine peristyle that was in the centre of the house had not been cut. It was, it is true, full of wild flowers, buttercups and cuckoo-flowers and white marguerites, but I suspect there was no æsthetic reason for leaving them there. They would be made into hay a little later on, for the frugal German mind refuses to waste

anything. Winding walks through the woodland led towards the *Aus-sichts-Punkt*, the "view" which is so carefully noted and cherished by all good Germans. But it was a tangled wilderness, when it might; by the exercise of a little of that love and care to which gardens respond so readily, have been a beautiful setting to the old house and to the troop of conspicuously lovely children belonging to our host and hostess, who were people of great taste in certain directions, having travelled widely and accumulated many treasures of art. This did not, however, prevent their house from being in its interior arrangements rather ugly and uncomfortable. They had not been able to get away from the chocolate walls so beloved in Germany. The big hall, with a curving staircase at one side which, if it had been in an English house, would have been converted into a charming lounge with Persian rugs on the floor, with tables and cosy chairs, plants and newspapers abounding on every side, was a terribly bare place, the boards painted chocolate colour and no furniture in it excepting an iron stove and the usual arrangements for hats and coats. There was no sense of home in it. It repelled one instead of being inviting and alluring. Yet the luncheon was served on costly china, our *bouillon* was drunk from bowls of egg-shell porcelain, each unique of its kind, brought by our host from Japan, and our dessert knives were works of art in jade and mother-of-pearl. In the children's nurseries hung original paintings by Richter, the child's artist *par excellence* of Germany.

"I like them to grow up with such things," said their father to the Empress; "it forms their taste unconsciously."

The Empress agreed, though she afterwards said that she thought that good reproductions would have been just as effectual.

The only really cheerful, modern-looking, but tasteful and pretty room in the house was the nursery of the younger children, one of whom, a tiny baby, was there in the arms of the nurse, a stout-looking peasant woman, who, sitting beside the tiled English fire-place surrounded by white enamelled furniture, managed to look conspicuously out of place.

It was altogether rather a bewildering visit. The courteous, cultured host and hostess, the latter in a wonderful gown from Vienna; the beautiful rosy children with their suite of schoolrooms and nurseries; the evidences of wealth and the desire for beauty and artistic surroundings, together with the lack of knowledge how to attain it fully; for the setting of all the beautiful things the Count had collected, of his lovely wife and children, was hopeless—nobody and nothing can look well against a painted chocolate background even when green plush curtains are added.

These curious inconsistencies, or what appeared so to me, were always cropping up and meeting one in Germany. Naturally we have them in England too, but they manifest themselves in different ways. In Germany everybody believes in the cult of the "Beautiful" and

strains after it, often laboriously destroying, or at least neglecting, what lies close at hand, to spend much money and labour on less beautiful things.

I remember another garden, one where I spent many happy hours with the charming people who owned it. It was separated from a lake only by a low balustrade, and the children of the family, as the father, a son of the celebrated Dubois-Reymond, once said to me, "have to become amphibious at an early age or else die of drowning." So the boys and girls became amphibious, and possessed and knew how to manage every kind of light water-craft that is known upon the lakes. Their garden was small, but even in its neglected condition beautiful. A rose grew over the balustrade and gazed at its own loveliness in the water, a rose which struggled against neglect, against non-pruning, against unsuitable and water-logged soil. It did its best, but with a little help it might have done so much better; and as for the two or three standards in the centre bed, waving loose from their stakes in the breeze that swept over the lakes, they stretched out despairing arms begging for a support which was denied them. On the kitchen side of the house was a *Laube*, a slight erection of poles, over which in summer the wild vine—the "gadding vine," as Milton calls it—spread a thick green canopy through which the sunlight filtered in a lush golden-green. Here the maids sat to drink their afternoon coffee, to eat what old-fashioned Germans still call their *Vesper-brod*, and to enjoy, if the mosquitoes for which Potsdam is famous

would permit, the evening air. All those gardens of the villas along the lake-side were much the same. There was always the *Laube,* a few neglected roses, and the scraggly, untrimmed grass. No one ever considered the garden, or if they did, were ever conscious of any possibilities of improvement in it. Probably all German gardeners have the same standard of achievement. They seem to walk about a good deal in wooden shoes wearing a blue apron, they are continually raking the sandy paths, they clear up the dead leaves in autumn, they mow the grass with a scythe when they consider it has grown a sufficient length,—perhaps two or three times a year,—and they cannot imagine that people want anything more, and as a rule they don't. Some wildly enterprising garden-lovers, however, will purchase one or two of those ugly little china gnomes, grinning cheerfully from under their scarlet jelly-bag caps at the passer-by, and deposit them, one in a sitting, the other in a standing position, in the centre of their garden surrounded by painfully-arranged rock-work and a few rather smoky-looking shrubs.

The gay cottage gardens which we know in England are never seen in Germany, not even in the neighbourhood of the Emperor's palaces. One reason for this may be the national custom of employing women in the country districts to do the field work, so that they naturally have little time or inclination for the cultivation of flowers; and though great and not unsuccessful efforts have been made to encourage the Berlin work-

man to take an interest in gardening, the allotment grounds which I used to pass when going on the railway from Potsdam to Berlin were entirely devoted to vegetables, with perhaps a *Laube* overrun with a creeper erected in one corner. But the workman who cultivates and exhibits roses or chrysanthemums with the success that is done in England has not yet been evolved in modern Germany.

I have a very vivid recollection of an exhibition of flowers in Berlin which I once saw when in attendance on the young Princess, who visited it in company with the Emperor and Empress. As a display of flowers, it could not be said to enter into competition either in the way of tasteful arrangement or high-class quality of material with our English exhibitions. What to me was a very painful incident characterized the very beginning of the Royal tour of inspection.

The Princess had arrived in a carriage before her parents, and while waiting for their coming, walked into the part of the exhibition near to the entrance, where she saw the wall before her covered with an enormous canvas on which was painted, in distemper, what purported to be a portion of the gardens of the "Achilleion," the Emperor's palace at Corfu, of which a corner had been included in the picture. There were marble steps in the foreground leading the spectator by imperceptible degrees into a bed of real tulips of very beautiful colours, which were arranged in front of this artistic atrocity, copied from a picture-post-card and

the work of a young gardener, who in frock-coat and white kid gloves stood in front of his masterpiece, looking rather nervous, but obviously prepared for congratulations and thanks on the part of Royalty. The Princess, then a girl of fourteen, admired the canvas and told the artist that it was *sehr nett*,—very nice,—though, as she whispered to me, the sea in the picture was not a bit like the real sea in Corfu.

When the Emperor and Empress arrived together a few minutes afterwards, they, with their daughter and the large suite in attendance, were conducted through the smiling, bowing crowd at the entrance, and immediately halted in front of the dreadful canvas. The complacent secretary of the exhibition introduced it and its author, who stood beside it in a radiance of glory, while the surrounding fashionable crowd looked smilingly on.

The Emperor stared across the tulips at the canvas, while the Empress murmured a kindly, though dubious, "*sehr nett*," and the ladies and gentlemen of the suite also concentrated their eyeglasses upon the picture. The young gardener, standing beside it, was obviously uplifted to the highest pinnacle of bliss. He was not left there long, however.

It was certainly a crude and inartistic performance, but I was surprised at the anger displayed by the Emperor. He was obviously extraordinarily sensitive with regard to his palace in Corfu and the impression which it conveyed to the public. Yet one would think

PRINCE AUGUSTUS WILLIAM OF PRUSSIA, FOURTH SON OF THE GERMAN EMPEROR

that he must have grown somewhat callous and indifferent towards loyal attempts to perpetuate himself, his wife and family, and his dwelling-places, in well-meant but hopelessly ignorant ways. It is one of the penalties that so obviously attach to any public position. But he stood before the canvas in a dead silence, his face growing sterner and darker, and a kind of shiver of apprehension fell on the smiling crowd, and the young gardener seemed to wilt and shrink together and his face grew white.

I had never seen William with such an angry look in his eyes, such palpably furious contempt in his look. The secretary, smitten with dismay, was murmuring phrases which broke off suddenly in the middle, and the Emperor kept on staring at the picture. It never seemed to occur to him that this was the naïve, well-meaning, and loyally-intended work of an artistically uneducated man, and that in any case it was not meant to be looked at nearly, but its effect judged from a distance; or that the crushed individual who was responsible for it would suffer miserably at the thought of the time and labour he had expended, only to achieve a ghastly public failure.

But the Emperor was absorbed in furious contemplation, and saw in the picture merely a caricature of his well-beloved "Achilleion." At last, breaking the uncomfortable silence, he thrust his head forward and barked out a few angry sentences.

"*That*," and he nodded at the picture, quite ignoring

the beautiful tulips surrounding it, "*that* is supposed to be my garden in Corfu. It's not a bit like it" (I am sure no one, even those who had not been there, had thought that it could be, excepting in the limited picture-post-card sense), "not the *least* like it"—his voice rising in angry crescendo. "It's horrible, horrible!" He hissed the word "*grässlich*" between his teeth, and flung himself round so suddenly that it was with difficulty that his suite could move away quickly enough to let him pass on into the interior of the exhibition. It was surprising that in such a public manner, before so many witnesses, the Emperor should have given way to the feelings stirred in him by the unfortunate gardener's efforts, for as a rule he always seemed conciliatory and affable to the public.

He cares little for his own gardens beyond insisting that they shall supply him constantly with fresh vegetables both in and out of season, and the Empress herself, though fond of flowers, takes no immediate interest in the arrangement of the grounds, which might be vastly improved by judicious planting, but are at present commonplace and characterless, with the exception of those in Wilhelmshöhe; but even here, with the splendid background of the hills behind, the attempt to improve on Nature has chiefly taken the form of making artificial cascades and waterworks. They are due to a former Elector of Cassel, who in those days suffered from no labour troubles, using his people's muscles to move the enormous blocks of stone he needed for his cascades,

and sometimes selling his subjects like cattle to his cousin of Hanover and England, who sent them by shiploads to fight for him in America.

This castle of Wilhelmshöhe, situated in the midst of beautiful scenery, with the town of Cassel lying in a hollow of the hills beneath it, is, in its interior arrangements and decoration, the most delightful of all the huge palaces belonging to the Emperor, possessing as it does an air of gaiety and lightness which is to be found in no other of the Imperial houses, built, as are most of them, round an arid courtyard of gravel or sand. But every room in Wilhelmshöhe, erected by an Elector William of Hesse-Cassel, looks towards the hills on one side or the other. On the one lies the red-roofed town, and beyond it are to be seen the blue lines of melting peaks far away on the horizon, on the other the nearer slopes of the Taunus range rise up from the garden in pleasantly-wooded inclines, intersected by broad winding carriage and foot ways.

The furniture of the Castle is of the early Empire style and was probably placed in it at the time when it was occupied by that brother of Napoleon, Jerome, King of Westphalia, who married an American lady, Miss Paterson, whom he was forced to divorce and to take as a wife more fitting to his rank a daughter of the King of Würtemberg, who became devotedly attached to him, refusing to desert her husband when he was driven from his throne.

Together with the Empire furniture were a good many

other objects, clocks and vases of an earlier period, always a subject of dispute to the ladies and gentlemen of the suite during their yearly stay of a month in the Castle, as to whether they belonged to the Louis Quinze or Louis Seize period. We were divided into two camps, each holding tenaciously to its own views. The general paucity of subjects for conversation naturally made any point in dispute much too valuable to be easily abandoned, and one of the adjutants used to amuse himself every year on his first appearance in the salon where we all assembled before and after dinner by throwing this apple of discord into the middle of the company.

"How beautiful that clock is! Louis Quinze, isn't it?" he would say.

"No; Louis Seize," would reply firmly one lady, darting looks of defiance at somebody near who she knew held a different opinion.

Then he would press for information as to the distinctive characteristics of the two periods, which nobody, however tenacious in support of her own views, was able to supply, excepting in a vaguely indecisive manner —generally, however, quoting some great authority such as Dr. Bode, or the Director of the Hohenzollern Museum. Sometimes he would suggest that the clock might be a connecting-link possessing some of the features of both periods, but this adjustment was always energetically rejected by both parties, and the proper classification of the timepiece, which was a very beautiful and

costly piece of work, still remains somewhat doubtful in my mind.

If the German has not yet acquired a taste for gardening, he at any rate never neglects, as we are apt to do in England, the abounding beauties provided by nature. Every little out-of-the-way country *Wirtshaus* is keen to draw to itself customers by advertising on its walls the *Schöner Aus-sichts-punkt* that may be seen at a little distance, and the *Verschönerungs-Verein*—the "Association of Beautification"—places benches at all points where the traveller, in the opinion of the *Verein*, ought to stop and admire.

There was a tiny village a few miles outside Potsdam, the merest little sketch of a place, with no very palpable attractions, but it possessed one natural feature,—rather rare in this flat landscape of the Mark Brandenburg,—a hill or hillock it may be called, of such a nature that its grassy slopes provided a natural toboggan slide, or *Rutsch-Bahn* as they are called in Germany. Enterprising youngsters first discovered its possibilities and with pieces of board joyously cascaded down its slopes on Sundays, but the proprietor of the small inn suddenly one day glimpsed his opportunities and had the magic word *Rutsch-Bahn* painted on his house front, while at the same time he ordered some short lengths of board from the village carpenter. Since then he has flourished exceedingly. The *Rutsch-Bahn* being quiet and secluded, people took their children out there for an afternoon's fun. Staid professors and their stout motherly wives

have been seen "*rutsching*" gravely, with sober but none the less intense enjoyment down the slope. After climbing the hill with their boards several times in the heat of the afternoon they are glad to go to the inn and drink copiously of coffee under the shade of mine host's cherry-trees.

The Germans, as we knew them before the war, were remarkable for their love of small domestic ceremonies. Birthdays, for example, which we in England keep in a perfunctory way with casual congratulations, sometimes omitted, and in the case of children with presents, are in the best-regulated German households days of agitation and preparation for the whole family. There will probably be an early morning song, performed outside the victim's door, and his plate at the breakfast-table will have a flower-wreath round it which will be terribly in the way but must on no account be disturbed.

A birthday cake will occupy the middle of the table, bearing with implacable attention to detail and accuracy the number of candles equal to the victim's age.

"Aunt Lotta is thirty-five to-day; I think it's quite time she was married," suddenly remarked one small boy in a pause in the conversation at a birthday party, and Aunt Lotta, whose opinion coincided with that of her nephew, resolved to spend her birthday away from home in future.

At the Prussian Court, as long as the young Princess was a child, she revelled in the preparations for birthday anniversaries, and was very fond of sprinkling the dinner-

table with flowers, taken out of any vases that might be standing near. The result of her efforts was to make the tablecloth extremely damp, and it was often difficult to keep bunches of greenery out of one's soup, so thickly was the ornamentation spread. On very special occasions she would put small vases and china groups among the flowers which she arranged with meticulous care. The round dining-table in her room had a very festive appearance when she had finished with it, and if one had difficulty in finding one's bread or in replacing a wine-glass after drinking, inconveniences of this kind were felt to be a small price to pay for the happy look of satisfaction in the face of the small child opposite. As her birthday was on September 13, a time when the Emperor and Empress were away at the great autumn manœuvres, she usually celebrated it without the presence of any other members of her family, but this fact never seemed to trouble her at all, as she had the whole of the Palace on that day at her command and exercised the privilege to the fullest degree.

Her chief joy was her escape from lessons, and she was delighted if her tutor, the day before the great event, inadvertently remarked, "To-morrow we will continue——"

"To-morrow?" she would interrupt; "to-morrow?" Then in firm tones not unmingled with contempt, "To-morrow there will be no lessons."

"Why not, Princess?" the tutor would ask with assumed ignorance, for the Princess had made the

approaching anniversary the chief subject of conversation for the last fortnight.

She would laugh and toss her books into her desk with an air of relief. She hated the constant grind of lessons, especially when she wanted to be out in the air and sunlight.

In the year 1909, the present King of Greece, with his wife Queen Sophie and their family, came and stayed for some weeks with the Emperor at the New Palace. There was some kind of internal trouble in Greece, and the Crown Prince, as he then was, had become rather unpopular. The eldest son, Prince George, now Crown Prince, was a very handsome, manly boy, and the eldest daughter, Princess Helene, a very charming and really pretty girl—not pretty merely because she happened to be a Princess—but of a striking beauty, and strangely enough, considering that she was of mixed Danish and German blood, of an essentially Greek type. Young Prince George of Greece for a time was attached to a Potsdam regiment, doing duty along with the Emperor's sons, while Prince Alexander, the second son, a boy of sixteen, was sent to a military cadet school, just outside Potsdam, and used to spend his Sundays at the Palace —that is, when the authorities of the school permitted. He complained bitterly one day to me, not, he was anxious to make it clear, at the early rising and incessant work, but at the constant strict military discipline which pervaded everything.

"If a master asks, or we ask a master, the simplest

question," complained the Prince, "we have to put our heels together and make a military salute. It's all right in a regiment or when we are being drilled, but having to do it so constantly makes one feel like a machine. When I go to see my mother and she speaks to me suddenly, I feel my heels going together and my arms going down to my sides before I can answer her. It's getting to be automatic."

Princess said that it was "*Dumm*" (stupid), and Prince Alexander said the life bored him dreadfully. He was a studious, clever boy, and like the rest of his family spoke fluently English, French, German, and Greek.

The present King of Greece is a tall, good-looking man, inclined to be bald. At that time he had an uneasy, worried look, and both he and his wife appeared to be a somewhat silent couple, intimidated by the Emperor's more assertive personality. I think that all the Emperor's sisters were a little afraid of him. During the visit of "the Greeks," as they were called in the household, another sister, Princess Margaret of Hesse, a sweet, kind-hearted woman, came for a few days, and once when there was but a small table at luncheon and no other guests present, excepting the suite in attendance, the two sisters, the then Crown Princess of Greece and the Princess Margaret, sat one on each side of the Emperor. During the time the meal lasted the two Princesses hardly exchanged a word with their brother, while he on his side directed his conversation entirely to people opposite

or at the ends of the table. Of the four sisters of the Emperor, none was very good-looking or distinguished in appearance, though the eldest one, Princess Charlotte of Saxe-Meiningen, had been, I was told by an old general of the Emperor's suite, very pretty indeed in her youth. The next one, now Queen Sophie of Greece, had a round fresh agreeable face and was a very kind and affable woman, but she always had an apprehensive, seldom-smiling expression, as though weighted with many anxieties, and the King's face too had a similar look as of gnawing cares and perplexities. They conveyed the idea that their visit to the New Palace and the Imperial relative was not a very happy one. But they and their family of five children made the pleasantest impression of unspoiled and simple natures and of a happy family life.

The third sister of the Emperor, married to Prince Frederick Charles of Hesse, was the Princess Margaret, above-mentioned, the favourite daughter of her mother the Empress Frederick, who left her the house at Cronberg, near to Homburg, which she built after her husband's death, naming it after him, "Friedrichs-hof."

This Princess was the mother of six sons, two pairs of twins among them. The eldest son, Max, a mere boy, was killed in 1914 at the beginning of the war. He was one of the first of the cousins of the Emperor's daughter with whom I made acquaintance, as he came frequently with his brother "Fritz," two little boys in white sailor suits, to play with the little Princess. The twins were

the four youngest boys, and as "Max" and "Fritz" were nearly of the same height, the year's difference between them was not noticeable, and many people thought that they too were twins.

The youngest of all the sisters was the Princess Adolf of Schaumburg-Lippe, a very lively lady, who had once been proposed as a bride for the late Prince Alexander of Battenberg, for a short time Prince of Bulgaria. She had no children and was in temperament something like her elder brother, rather restless and erratic, and delighted in shocking the prejudices of the Court. She always appeared at Court ceremonies in rather a daring *décolletage*, all the more daring and rather puzzling in view of the fact that in the middle of her back she had two large and very disfiguring black warts of unusual size, which, with a slight raising of what one gentleman called "the high-water mark" of her dress at the back —one which even then would have been rather below than above the accepted standard in such matters— might have been concealed, but which the Princess evidently determined should be revealed in their full ugliness. She was a tall, not ungraceful woman, with a queer ugly face, and used to flit through the Court on the rare occasions when she came to it, leaving behind her a track of outraged and scandalized officials. She was generally late for all the ceremonies, and rushed when she ought to have been walking with slow deliberation, and giggled when she should have been most grave. She loved to shatter the calm majesty and decorum of

the stateliest ceremonies, and made audible remarks at inopportune moments.

The Emperor's only brother,—two of the Empress Frederick's sons died in childhood,—Prince Henry of Prussia, and his wife, formerly Princess Irene of Hesse, a daughter of the English Princess Alice, were fairly frequent visitors to the Court. Princess Henry was not as good-looking as her sisters the Empress of Russia and the Grand-Duchess Sergius. She had a rather florid complexion and no graces of person beyond a pleasant smiling face, but she was a very kind and actively good-natured personality. Her husband had a much more distinguished appearance, especially out of uniform, than his brother, with whom personally he has little likeness. He is inclined to be lean, fairly tall, of bright, weather-beaten complexion, quite unlike the Emperor, who is not above middle height, rather stocky in figure, and has a sallow complexion, excepting after a sea-trip, when he comes back again looking bronzed and immensely improved.

Once at the dinner-table, when Prince Henry was present, and the Emperor in a very talkative humour, the conversation turned on Afghanistan, and a question arose as to the size of that country.

The Emperor turned to me.

"How large is Afghanistan?" he inquired, with his usual mocking tone. He was quite convinced that English people never knew anything, and I was not prepared to answer his question off-hand.

"Is it as large as Sussex?" he persisted, while I hesitatingly tried to collect my scattered thoughts and compare Afghanistan as I knew it on the map with other countries in its neighbourhood.

"Oh yes," I replied, relieved to hear a question which I could confidently answer correctly, "much larger than England——" I was going on to say that I believed it was half as large as Germany, when the Emperor went on talking.

"Larger than England? How very large it must be. Dear me!—larger than England!"

"Four or five times larger," I managed to call out.

But the Emperor turned to his brother sitting beside him, and with his eyes bulging with affected astonishment said, "Did you hear that, Henry? Afghanistan is *larger* than England—larger than England."

Everybody laughed, and then Prince Henry invited anyone at table to inform him of the exact size of Afghanistan; but nobody could tell him, not even the Emperor himself, which was surprising, for he rarely asked anyone a question of that kind without having first ascertained the correct answer.

Meantime one of the officials had sent a footman for a Gazetteer, and amid the hilarity of the table read out the exact size of Afghanistan, which was, I believe, 600,000 square kilometres, or something of that kind, information conveying no definite idea to the seeker after knowledge.

After this point was settled, the conversation diverged to other matters, but from time to time Prince Henry would turn to the gentleman who had sent for the reference book, and say, "Let me see, how large did you say Afghanistan was?" But the unfortunate man could never remember without looking it up again. At last he kept the book open beside him; but even then the Prince would not leave him in peace, but as the company rose from table challenged him once more to tell him, without looking at the book, the exact number of square kilometres in Afghanistan.

It was Prince Henry who first persuaded the Emperor in 1904 to invest in an automobile, for he is an enthusiastic motorist, and has also always taken a deep interest in the development of aviation in Germany.

The Emperor, although later on he allowed himself to be persuaded into an interest in the efforts of Count Zeppelin's "dirigible balloons," was for a long time very sceptical of their future possibilities, and it was not until the whole of Germany was growing excited over them, and the first few successful flights had been made, —flights followed almost immediately after, however, by a series of disasters,—that he allowed himself to head the wave of popular enthusiasm, and in the summer of 1909 personally invited the Count to come in his airship to Berlin, where he received a tremendous national ovation, and dined with the Royal Family and a large and brilliant company who had been commanded to meet him.

I remember that day, and all the feverish days of excitement that preceded it. In our calmer, more phlegmatic England it is difficult to make people understand with what seething excitement and interest, with what intense national pride and self-esteem the German public of all classes had greeted the flights of Count Zeppelin's airships, even although their destruction a few days after seemed to have become an almost inevitable consequence.

The picture-post-card shops — and their name is legion in Berlin and other German towns—were filled with every possible kind of card, many of them of a very coarse nature, depicting the entire German nation obsessed and distracted in all its occupations by the possibility of an airship overhead. There was the bridegroom at the church door rushing away from his bride, the mourners at a funeral flying in a body down the street, the mother leaving her crying child, the hungry man his dinner, at the cry of "*Zeppelin kommt,*" and absurd as these comic monstrosities were, they hardly exaggerated the attitude of the crowd. Everybody got what was called "Zeppelinitis," and the Court of Prussia shared in the general fever. Nobody could discuss anything but Zeppelin and the coming triumphs of Germany in the field of aviation. There were tremendously keen discussions at the Royal table about the comparative merits of the Zeppelin and Parseval airships, the former being rigid and the latter non-rigid. The several catastrophes which overtook Zeppelin air-

ships were always used as an argument against the rigid type.

I confess that to me the first sight of the wonderful air-machine was a very beautiful and thrilling one. The flat roof of the Schloss in Berlin was crowded with ladies and gentlemen connected with the Court, and from the time that the first faint speck appeared on the horizon, gradually increasing in size until it loomed overhead, a vast elongated bulk against the brilliant blue sky, the crowded streets below took on a strange, unfamiliar aspect. They all turned pink with the uplifted faces of a gigantic crowd, and then, as the Zeppelin manœuvred again and again round the Schloss, circling in majestic convolutions, climbing and descending, changing the plane of its movements with certainty and power, the pink of the crowd suddenly broke into a sea of white, the fluttering of innumerable handkerchiefs, while the cheers of the people, somewhat deadened by the mighty noise of the engines, swelled and stormed below. It was a beautiful, perfectly windless day, and it strikes me now with a strange half-comic ruefulness, that I, an alien and a foreigner in the land, should have felt something of the same thrill of enthusiasm of the people around me, even though the regretful thought forced itself into my mind that this triumph of human ingenuity and skill would inevitably be used for military purposes—in other words, with the object of destroying human life and human happiness.

A few days after his great triumph there came the

inevitable anti-climax, the fall and destruction of the great machine that so short a time before had circled so proudly above our heads; but by that time the German people had taken Zeppelins firmly to their hearts, and no disasters, not even those later ones involving horrible deaths by burning and drowning, could damp their enthusiasm for this newest war-machine, this huge air-monster which Germany had produced and brought to such perfection.

CHAPTER XIII

THE NAVY AND TABLE-TALK

ONE wet afternoon in the year 1906, while the Court was staying in Berlin, a rather wheezy, whining music could be heard proceeding from the salon of the Princess. Its tones rose and fell, now seeming to come nearer, now dying away. Presently it increased in volume, becoming every moment more insistent, and the door of my sitting-room, where I was trying to write letters, was suddenly burst open; and though at first when I looked up I could see no sufficient explanation of this phenomenon, presently round the intervening table crawled the Princess herself, on all fours, dragging beside her the instrument of torture—a kind of miniature barrel organ, with whose assistance she continued to play in front of me the combined rôles of a street organ-grinder and his monkey. The man and the beast were alternately in the ascendant, but the beast appeared to be the favourite part, judging from the longer duration of his "turns." The music was of an appallingly strident nature, and continued to be ground out relentlessly, by man or monkey, whichever happened at the moment to be controlling the handle,

the gestures made by the monkey revealing a remarkably intimate knowledge of the nature of these active quadrupeds, probably gathered during visits to the Berlin Zoo.

At last, when the human element had once more reasserted its sway, a cap—it was a blue sailor "muffin" belonging to Prince Joachim—was thrust out towards me, and in broken German-Italian I was requested to give something towards the support of the proprietor of the organ and the monkey. Already a few nickel *Pfennigs* lay there, showing that other members of the household had been laid under contribution. I presented the equivalent of a halfpenny, received with rapturous broken thanks from the man and extravagant demonstrations of joy on the part of the monkey, and then the Princess disappeared again, her track marked by the spasmodic wheezes and jerks of the instrument.

Later on I saw her, while dressing for dinner, counting up her gains.

"What shall you do with all that money, Princess?" I asked. It amounted in all to about ninepence halfpenny.

"I shall give it to the Navy League," she said seriously, beginning to count it all over again, and I went out, laughing to myself to think that I had contributed the sum of one halfpenny to the German Navy League, the avowed instrument of the "blue water" party in Germany, which was so bitterly hostile to England and so determined at all costs to increase the German Navy.

There was at that time, and indeed during all the years I spent in Germany, a great deal of agitation with regard to the German Navy. All the schools of the Empire had been stimulated to collect sums, which they had sent to the Navy League.

"Nearly enough to buy half a destroyer," had remarked one naval officer sarcastically, to whom such methods did not commend themselves. But every one was talking of the dire necessity of an increase in Germany's fleet; on the plastic mind of every child, by means of suitable illustrated literature, the urgent need of the Fatherland for more ships was imprinted, and the public sentiment was skilfully aroused as to the importance of this matter.

A few days after the organ-grinding expedition of the Princess, I saw for the first time the great inspirer of modern German naval policy, and of the Navy League, *Gross-Admiral* von Tirpitz, who lunched at the Royal table, where he was a fairly frequent guest. A rather quiet, silent man he seemed, who smiled rarely and fleetingly at the Emperor's quips and sallies of wit and appeared to have little dinner-table conversation. He was good-looking, of a tall, straight figure, bald-headed and wearing an exceptionally long thin beard. His face was fine-featured and rather pale, while his inscrutable rather pleasant brown eyes looked as though he were thinking of far-away things. Before luncheon was served he did not enter into conversation with any of the suite, but after grave and formal greetings, stood

apart wrapped in his own thoughts. His place at table was usually beside the Emperor, and from mine near the end I would often look up from my plate and catch the concentrated look of his brown eyes musingly fixed upon me, and I sometimes wondered if he were looking through me at something beyond, or if I reminded him of the British Empire and of the many things in our British policy that are an eternal puzzle to the German mind.

When William from time to time addressed remarks to him he answered in rather a soft deprecatory voice, in as few words as possible, relapsing again into his own thoughts, over which he seemed to brood while the laughter and talk flowed unnoticed around him.

Of all the men who came to Court, von Tirpitz always made upon me the impression of being the most able and sagacious, perhaps because he was so silent and inscrutable in his ways. He never gave an opinion, never revealed his thoughts in public, was always coldly polite, formal, and dignified. He obviously kept all his conversational efforts for strictly business purposes, and disdained to make himself agreeable and affable. The building of the first English Dreadnought formed at that time the chief topic of conversation among the upper social circles of Berlin. No one ever heard von Tirpitz air his views on them in society, but he began building German equivalents without any delay, wringing the money from a public which he had educated into a frenzied desire to have them.

The following year in September 1907, I went for three weeks to Plön, where the young Princes were educated, to give some English lessons to Prince Joachim, and being so near to Kiel I thought it would be a pity not to go and see the famous harbour and the German fleet. So, kindly escorted by a very amiable young German lieutenant with whose wife I was friendly, I went to Kiel and saw a part of the German war-fleet anchored in the landlocked harbour—ten warships lying like flat-irons on the water.

The lieutenant was possessed with a childlike desire that I should be impressed by the majesty and sufficiency of German naval preparedness, and took me round the harbour in a small steamer.

"They are fine, are they not?" he said, waving his hand at the distant warships, all anchored at equal distances and lying close to the water.

"Very fine," I answered; "nearly as fine as ours at home."

He winced visibly, for it is one of the drawbacks of German education that it does not prepare a man for light badinage on subjects which touch his national pride.

"Nearly as fine!" he said rather angrily. "You wait a-while—you will see if our navy is 'nearly as fine.' We intend to have the best navy in the world. You wait just a very little longer," and he shook his finger menacingly in the direction of England.

"All your warships," I said soothingly, trying to turn his thoughts in another direction, "burn Welsh

coal, don't they?—at least if they want to get up their best speed?"

He reluctantly admitted that it was so.

"That shows how idiotic we are in England, doesn't it?" I suggested. "We sell to your navy our best Welsh coal, while we keep on having to increase our naval expenditure enormously, yet if we stopped the supply of coal your fleet would be hopelessly crippled, wouldn't it? Because the best German coal isn't nearly as good as ours."

"Is that so?" he asked, and I replied that several German naval officers had told me of their gratitude to England in this matter.

When I returned to the New Palace from my visit to Plön, I informed the Princess that I had seen the German fleet at Kiel, whereupon she was very annoyed.

"That isn't the German fleet," she said hotly; "that's only a little tiny part of it. Don't think you've seen the German fleet; why, we've lots and lots more ships than that!"

I assured her that I was quite prepared to believe it.

"We shall soon have a much bigger fleet than you in England," she continued. Like most children she was blatantly and violently patriotic. "We are going to keep on building and building."

I could not resist teasing her a little.

"Oh well, in England we shan't be just sitting still and doing nothing, I hope—we shall be building too."

Hereupon she grew very angry indeed, so that I was

glad of an interruption which put an end to our talk. But she must have told the Emperor something of our conversation, for a day or two later he came up to me after dinner and said in his usual jocular manner, "So you saw some of our German ships at Kiel, I hear. What did you think of them, eh?"

I replied that I admired them exceedingly. "England must look to her own laurels," I concluded laughingly. "I see we must keep on building. No reduction yet possible in the Navy Estimates."

"But it's nonsense," burst out the Emperor, "to talk as if the German Navy were even approximately near the British Navy in size. We are a long, long way behind. I can't understand all this outcry in England against Germany building ships. We naturally have our trade interests to safeguard, our colonies to protect. How are we to do it without an efficient navy? Here you are building Dreadnoughts by the dozen, and if we build one or two there is a tremendous outcry in your Press."

He went on talking for a long time, obviously deeply injured at the English attitude of mind with regard to the German Navy.

I said that I thought it foolish of the English to expect any nation to stop building battleships if it chose to do so.

"It seems to me," I said, "that we ought to keep quiet and say nothing, but keep on building too. Only it's rather an expensive business."

It was a trait of the Emperor's character never to consider the expense of any scheme. It always irritated him. It appeared to him petty-minded to be trammelled by financial considerations. The money had to be found somehow. He left to others to discover how.

"Naturally no nation can build beyond its financial capacity," he replied shortly; "but it is a matter of safeguarding the nation, and considerations of cost must give way to considerations of safety."

I agreed heartily and said I supposed that was the reason that we in England were determined to maintain a very high proportional standard to the German one.

"We have not a magnificent army like Your Majesty's," I remember saying. "Our fleet is our first line of defence."

Our conversation, as so often happened with conversations at Court, was cut off just at the moment when it threatened to grow interesting by the departure of the Empress, but it was from about that time that, owing to the chance remark of an adjutant, I received the name of "the British Dreadnought."

"Dreadnoughts" were often talked about at the Royal table, the English name, pronounced with a marked German accent, being invariably employed. They were also much discussed in the newspapers, and a proper German equivalent for the word was eagerly sought for but never found, just as they were never able to discover a satisfactory corresponding phrase for *entente cordiale*. Two English words in constant use always

sounded strangely to my ears when they emerged from the rumble of German around one. They were "humbug" (a favourite word of the Emperor) and *boykott*. This latter word was fully Germanized and appeared as a properly accepted verb *boykottieren*.

Our table conversation at Rominten, the Emperor's shooting-lodge in East Prussia, from one portion of which the neighbouring Russian village of Wystidten could plainly be seen, was, I cannot explain for what reason, apt to be more interesting and stimulating than elsewhere. The Emperor spoke with less reserve,—though under no circumstances could his talk ever be called anything but unreserved,—perhaps I had better say with increased fluency and abandon, and he was as a rule invariably in good spirits, as he was able to enjoy uninterrupted sport, incessant occupation combined with healthy amusement, and to escape from the tedium of multitudinous ceremonies.

It was at Rominten, I remember, that the Emperor was full of an idea of his for making a new kind of shed for Zeppelins, another of those gigantic war-machines having recently met with fresh disaster in a forced descent. It had been caught in a high wind when on the ground, hopelessly damaged, and finally entirely consumed by fire.

He was very anxious that every one should listen to his theories on this new kind of air-shed, which was to have a roof constructed on the principle of those hurricane-proof roofs in the West Indies, where I believe the

eaves are brought down close to the floor so that the wind can get no purchase upon them. The Emperor was quite sure that something constructed on the same principle would be very efficacious for Zeppelins, but he was never quite clear, it seemed to me, as to whether it was to be applied to the Zeppelins themselves or to the sheds.

Another time he was very fluent on the subject of the Japanese, with whom, to his great indignation, England had just concluded a treaty. It was shortly after the end of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905.

"You make a treaty with such people!" he exclaimed, turning to me and speaking angrily as though he thought me personally responsible—and he proceeded to tell various anecdotes all turning on the treachery and cunning of the Japanese. One was of an English naval captain who had had a Japanese cook serving in the galley of his ship. Two years later this same captain, on visiting a Japanese battleship, discovered that his former cook was one of the superior officers of the ship. Another story was to the effect that, during the war, a Russian ship, having seized and taken a Japanese passenger steamer, discovered among the luggage of some of the men on board papers setting forth, among other things, the number of native regiments in India, together with the names of their British officers, and copious notes as to the possibility, if trouble arose, of their loyalty or disaffection to the British *Raj*. He addressed these stories, which I believe to be quite well

authenticated, across the table to me personally, speaking in English, and the tone of voice in which he told them was very angry and annoyed. When he reached the culminating point revealing Japanese duplicity he again repeated his former remark, thumping his clenched fist angrily on the table:

"And with people like these you form an alliance."

I felt almost personally guilty.

"It proves at any rate, Your Majesty," I said, "that the Japanese are not at all behind Europe in their Secret Service organization."

I cannot tell, to this day, if the Emperor really believed at that time that espionage of the kind indicated was peculiar to Japan.

At the time of the Russo-Japanese War in 1904, the feeling of the German public was, as far as I could gather from outsiders, entirely on the side of the Orientals, but the Emperor's sympathies, and in consequence those of his family, were whole-heartedly on the side of Russia.

"If they"—meaning the Russians—"do not sweep back the Japanese, we shall have to do it some day," he often remarked.

His little daughter, a great enthusiast for any cause she took up, had rather a trying time just then, for, anxious to have a clear and definite pronouncement on the subject, she demanded from every child who came in to play with her—two or three were invited every afternoon—in which direction lay their sympathies, Japanese or Russian. A shuffling reply was not the

least use. If a child professed hesitation or indecision, she was treated with scorn as a person of vacillating mind, and a colourless neutrality met with all the contempt it deserved. She was very grieved, however, to discover that every time that she pursued the inquiry to the bitter end, it was always a partisan of Japan, rarely of Russia, that was revealed.

She would enumerate on her fingers the chief reasons for her hope of Japan's ultimate defeat.

"First of all, because they are heathen," she would say; "secondly, because of Aunty Alix" (this was the Czarina); "and thirdly, because we shall have to beat them if the Russians don't."

She was very anxious at first to convert her little companions to her own views, but happily after a time became preoccupied with other equally absorbing and less contentious subjects of conversation.

It was always at the Rominten dinner-table that the Emperor talked a good deal about Russia, partly perhaps because it lay so few miles away. The officer in command of the frontier Russian garrison was always invited to luncheon during the Emperor's three weeks' stay. He was a tall, straight, rather bullet-headed man, still quite young, and his chest was covered with decorations. When I once expressed to a gentleman of the suite my surprise that one so young as he apparently was should possess such a number of distinctions, he answered in a tone of contempt, "But those are only '*Bahn-Steig Dekorationen*' (railway-platform decorations).

He has to form a guard of honour at the first Russian station whenever a royalty travels through, and they all send him something to add to his collection."

The Emperor was very indignant on the subject of the Russian fondness for decorations and the unblushing way in which they begged for them. One Russian officer on the occasion of the Emperor's visit to the Czar in what was then known as Petersburg—now Petrograd—being asked on what grounds he considered himself to be deserving of a decoration, replied that he had been in a room on duty several times when the Emperor had passed through.

There was a story too that the Emperor told every year at Rominten, the story of his Russian *troika*. It was a very amusing tale as related by His Majesty. On his State visit to the Czar after his own accession to the throne, he had greatly admired a Russian *troika*, the characteristic national travelling conveyance, where a team of three horses are harnessed abreast, of which the one in the middle canters, while the outsiders trot. The Czar presented the *troika* in question, including team, silver-mounted harness, and sleigh, to the Emperor, and in due time they were all sent, under the charge of an Imperial *Stall-Meister*, or subordinate master-of-the-horse, to the Royal stables in Berlin and delivered over to the German authorities there.

"But," as the Emperor remarked, "in transit they had undergone a subtle and mysterious change; the horses that were sent to Berlin were not the horses I

had seen in Petersburg—nor was the harness the same, though it had been very cleverly copied. The *Stall-Meister* had changed them *en route*, substituted inferior animals and harness and pocketed the difference. The Czar was informed of this very palpable peculation of his officials, and the *Stall-Meister* was deprived of his office and made governor of a district as a punishment!"

The climax of this story was always shouted out by the Emperor with roars of laughter and frantic table-thumpings.

"Well," he would say, "Caligula made his favourite horse into Consul of Rome, so why not make a peculating master-of-the-horse into governor of a Russian district?"

He was always saying that I ought to cross the frontier and visit the first Russian village so as to see the contrast between his own well-kept roads and houses at Rominten and those in Russia, but unfortunately there always arose some difficulty. Several times there were epidemics raging and at others a good deal of political unrest.

Once the nearest Russian village to the Emperor's estate, Wystidten, was almost totally destroyed by fire, and the Emperor himself rode over to visit it and sent food and money to the unfortunate people, strange-looking Russian Jews, the older men wearing their hair in long shining ringlets.

At Rominten the Court always indulged in fresh-water crayfish, almost the size of small lobsters, which

were handed round in a kind of silver fish-kettle from which we extricated them with long, curved silver forks. Though very delicious they were rather tiresome things to eat, as one had to dissect them very thoroughly to get at the best morsels which always lurked in the more inaccessible parts, and most of the gentlemen took them bodily in their hands and sucked them. In whatever way one chose to eat them the water in which they had been boiled invariably ran down one's sleeves and on to one's knees, so the ladies always wore their oldest evening-dresses when *Krebs* appeared on the menu, while an extra ten minutes or quarter of an hour was added on to the time occupied by dinner. Our table decorations were always the work of one of the Emperor's *Jägers*, who showed great taste in the arrangement of coloured autumn leaves, berries, fir-cones, and seed-pods of all kinds gathered from the hedges. There were no flowers in Rominten excepting a few late wild ones sheltering in the hedges.

On one of the last days of our stay there the officers of the nearest German garrison were usually invited to luncheon at the Jagd-Schloss, and the men of the regiment were also inspected by the Emperor.

During my last visit to Rominten an inspection of this kind took place, the men being drawn up in a hollow square round the four sides of the piece of grass and gravel around which the wooden Schloss was built.

The Empress, with the Princess and the ladies, was in

the gallery overlooking the courtyard, and we could all see and hear distinctly all that went on below.

The Emperor, as has been the invariable custom of the Hohenzollern sovereigns, went round the ranks of soldiers, asking questions of them, and testing their general knowledge. One remark I heard as he stopped underneath the gallery.

"What is a grenadier?"

"A soldier," was the reply.

"Yes, but what kind of a soldier—what does he do?"

I caught sight of the face of the young lieutenant in command of this platoon, and never saw groping perplexity written more largely on any man's face. He would have been obviously incapable of a reply.

The Emperor, not getting a satisfactory answer from the young soldier, proceeded to instruct him in the functions of a grenadier as primarily "a thrower of hand-grenades," explaining in detail how first of all a few grenadiers were attached to each regiment of soldiers, how later on whole companies of them were formed, and when the fashion of throwing bombs by hand went out, the name was still retained.

"But it is quite possible," I heard him say, "that with the new explosives that have been discovered, hand-grenades will again be used in modern warfare with practical effect, and the name 'grenadier' mean what it originally did."

A certain familiarity and jocular breeziness with

which the Emperor treated his soldiers helped to make him very popular with them.

As he came on parade, either on foot or on horseback, or when he met them by chance out in the Potsdam fields, his invariable greeting of them was, "*Guten Morgen, Kamaraden,*" and the stentorian reply as one man, "*Morgen, Majestät,*" was wonderfully effective, and seemed to introduce a kind of unexpected social amenity into the harsh discipline of the Prussian army.

Sometimes as I sat at my sitting-room window in the New Palace I would hear the new recruits at the barracks across the Mopke being practised in this morning salute. They had to say it hundreds of times, until the words were snapped out all together like a thunderclap, sudden and sharp, and without any ragged edges, with promptness and decision, and above all in a tone of overwhelming energy and strength of volume.

The recruit with a high-pitched, squeaky voice had a bad time of it with the instructor.

CHAPTER XIV

BRITISH BLUNDERS

HERE may be set down a few instances of the unfavourable, frequently ridiculous, light in which the English, with a strange fatality, so often appeared to place themselves in their dealings with the Germans. I only speak of the incidents within my own immediate knowledge, and can only hope that our private diplomacy eight or nine years ago was better than our social attempts at *rapprochement*, which were often sadly deficient in just those qualities which are most necessary to success, the qualities needed to conciliate and attract, but which in these instances appeared more calculated to repel and offend, still worse, to throw contempt on our efforts, and give an impression of our national want of tact, lack of punctuality, and general incapacity.

One of these occasions stands out very vividly in my mind, because it was my first personal experience of the inadequacy of British methods, of the lack of means to an end, of the general breezy, happy-go-lucky style which, in dealing with a sober, serious, conscientious, highly-educated people like the Germans, was the

least efficacious way of winning them to our views.

As a rule, the Englishman who has lived in Germany for any length of time, and consorted with Germans, speedily gains an insight into their mode of thought, their manner of viewing things; and while retaining his own ideas on men and matters, he is able to extend sympathy and appreciation to the German outlook, and can perceive that the German development of a national character is necessarily and inevitably moulded by historical and continental necessities, just as the British character has developed insularly, with certain silent reserves and limitations unknown, and frequently misunderstood, in Germany.

The type of Englishman who knows his Germany knows also what to avoid and what line to take in dealing with anything so hyper-sensitive, so open to attack, so highly strung and nervous as the German national consciousness; he does not go blundering along, making a fatuous exhibition of himself and betraying at every step his complete indifference and ignorance about matters which all Germans hold most dear. He does not trample unnecessarily and with a blithe unconsciousness of harm on all their national prejudices and affections. But this too frequently is what our British representatives, men fresh from England, with no knowledge of Germany and its ways, appear to have done.

On the particular occasion to which I have referred,

there was a gathering together of English and Germans intent on creating the Anglo-German equivalent of an *entente cordiale*. A steamer-load of enthusiastic British gentlemen had crossed the North Sea, had visited various German towns, made innumerable speeches, eaten quantities of unknown German dishes, visited *Denkmals*, *Museums*, *Bier-Gartens*, been entertained and fêted in the hearty German manner. Their triumphant path was strewn with flowers and Rhine wine, and the German eagle and the British lion appeared to be fraternizing in an agreeable if somewhat physiologically unnatural manner. The pacifists were more than hopeful, they were absolutely content. The Germans on their part seemed anxious to meet their British visitors half-way, and to extend a hospitable and friendly hand. When the British delegates at last arrived in Berlin, the Emperor invited them to the New Palace, and though not personally present gave them luncheon there and deputed officials to see that they received every possible attention and politeness. I remember from my window in the angle of the Palace standing to watch the horde of gentlemen who, emerging from the Palace doors, flowed in a black-coated flood over the terrace and steps, breaking up and re-forming into little constantly changing pools, finally being carefully shepherded into Imperial carriages and driven off to see Sans Souci and the Potsdam palaces. The Emperor, before the delegates left Berlin, received a deputation of them who wished to read to him an address. By the kindness of the Empress,

always extremely thoughtful and considerate in such matters, I was allowed to be present at the ceremony. The Emperor and Empress and the Princess Victoria Louise walked first, with the ladies and gentlemen following, through the ornate dining-room with its Rococo frivolities of Apollo and the nymphs engarlanded in flowers, through the *Roten-Kammer* with its red silk hangings, and on till they reached the big *Muchsel-Saal*, where the deputation, a semicircle of anxious-looking gentlemen, some in clerical attire, the rest in ordinary morning dress, were standing. The Emperor bowed, and the address was read in clear, distinct tones by one of the leading members of the deputation. The Emperor was not, I noticed, in his usual urbane, happy humour, but appeared silent and preoccupied, and there was a consequent vague chilliness and severe formality present in the atmosphere, which one felt was charged with disappointment. For one thing, the hour for the reception of the delegates unfortunately clashed with the time when the Emperor and Empress would have started for the races at Hoppegarten. Their motor-cars were waiting outside to take them away, and the deputation—though the inconvenience of their arrival was due to a German official and had been arranged by him—were, unconsciously to themselves, regarded as something in the nature of a nuisance. The address was admirably composed, and expressed in few but happily chosen words the desire for the strengthening of the ties which bound Germany and England together, and gave utterance to

the good wishes of the delegates for the Emperor's personal well-being.

At its conclusion, after the Emperor had made a short but formal reply, the usual less formal part of the ceremony began; but, owing to the want of warmth and spontaneity in the Emperor's conversation with the leader of the delegates, a gentleman who grew obviously more nervous and ill at ease as time went on, the interview can hardly have done much to forward the enterprise on behalf of which it was arranged. It was unfortunate, because the Emperor in his more cheerful moods is a very ingratiating personality and has a charm of manner which takes captive the judgment of many serious and learned men who come within the sphere of its influence. But when anything has perturbed his mind, or he is suffering from annoyance, he has not the faculty of conquering or putting it aside. He is a man of "moods"—cheerful moods on the whole, but sometimes very much the contrary. He is one of the men whose judgment is liable to be warped by personal feeling.

But the visit of the deputation, if not conspicuously successful, was by no means a failure. It was reserved for the last final effort of the English in Berlin to deal a severe blow to my national pride. An informal gathering and supper had been arranged where Germans and English would meet and fraternize, swear eternal friendship, and pledge themselves to work together for a better understanding of each other, an object with which I was heartily in accord. Accompanied by a German

friend—a professor of one of the universities—I wended my way to the big hall where the reception was held, and found it already in full swing. The people were scattered about at little tables listening to music, there was a representative gathering of Germans and Englishmen seated on the platform above the audience, while the German and British flags were lovingly entwined together in a wealth of evergreens. When the music was finished and the applause had died down, the headmaster of one of the big Government schools in Berlin rose up and made a speech in English—a clear, well-enunciated speech—for every German, as a child, is painstakingly trained to express himself, not only in well-chosen language, but in tones which will make no excessive demands on the aural capacities of the hearer; "mumbling" is not permitted, but a rather shouting, declamatory style is encouraged in announcing even the smallest incident. So the German's speech had nothing of the shamefaced modesty which often characterizes English orators and makes them appear anxious to conceal rather than reveal their ideas to an expectant audience, and the matter was no less good than the delivery. It was lucid and convincing, pointing out the patent benefits of an Anglo-German alliance; it was full of practical common sense, but touched also with appealing sentiment; it alluded to the mutual indebtedness of German and English literature, contained apposite quotations from Shakespeare which it is probable that many of the English present failed to

recognize, and was, from every point of view, an admirable and excellent address which made a very happy impression on the audience. He was followed by an English gentleman, newly arrived in Germany, who stepped from among the group on the platform, and in the well-known English parliamentary manner, in an agreeable, breezy, electioneering style, his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat,—an attitude which to a German is exceedingly strange and *unvornehm*—undignified,—he proceeded, in a jaunty, easy, light-hearted way, to harangue that serious cultivated audience of expectant Germans. I can never forget the acute agony of mind which I suffered during the next few minutes. If, at the risk of broken bones, a trap-door in the floor had opened and swallowed me up, so that I had been spared the frightful exhibition that gentleman made of himself, I should have been eternally grateful. I still wince at the recollection and at the shame of it, at his fatuous smiles and wriggles, at his feeble, laboured, quite incomprehensible witticisms, at his childish appeals and assertions that if the people there assembled together would only continue to drink tea together for a few months longer England and Germany would be welded into an abiding friendship which no diplomatic blunders could assail. He appeared to have nothing whatever to say and eked out the paucity of his ideas by a multiplicity of words and sentences which, beginning with a promise of something vital and interesting, died away in meaningless puerilities and vapidness. The perora-

tion and conclusion of his speech was an attempt to lisp out a German sentence which he appeared to have painfully acquired a few hours previously and subsequently forgotten, retaining in his memory merely some broken fragments and chippings of a once noble sentiment.

After he had jerked and wriggled himself to the painfully childish conclusion of his attempt to cement Anglo-German friendship, I, in an agony of mental humiliation, escaped into the night to ponder, as the train carried me back to the New Palace, on our strange English methods of doing things, of our choice of men, of our neglect of those who can, and our patronage of those who can't. I reflected on the Englishmen who knew how to handle German audiences and could speak their language, and of the painful blunderer to whom had been entrusted a delicate task for which he was palpably unfitted. I wondered if all nations were guilty of these mistakes, or if it were an English monopoly. I thought of the late Sir Robert Collins, who was at that time gentleman-in-waiting to the Duchess of Albany, and a cultured man of the world, speaking fluent German, full of subtle tact and sympathy, and I reflected on the impression he had made at the Prussian Court during the two years he had resided at Potsdam in attendance on the Duchess. How agreeably surprised and pleased they had been at his knowledge of German history and literature, at his general culture,—nothing appeals like culture to the German mind,—and at his surprising capacity—he was no longer very young—as

a sportsman, on the ice, or in the saddle. A *fein-gebildeter Mann* he had often been called, with a tone of genuine admiration and liking not always heard when a German speaks of an Englishman. There were many men of his type in England, but we did not appear to use them. The best of the English nation was kept in the background, doing the quiet work which tells in the long run and waiting doubtless to repair with blood and toil the harm wrought by the fatuous blunderer.

Some minor contretemps of perhaps no grave importance in themselves occurred when the late King Edward visited the Prussian Court. On the first occasion when he visited the Emperor and Empress at Wilhelmshöhe his arrival was timed for nine o'clock in the morning, so that the whole population of Wilhelmshöhe and the neighbouring town of Cassel were early astir and lined up on the route in good time. All the school children were granted a holiday by the Emperor. I have heard him remark that nothing roots a monarch so firmly in the affections of the rising generation as the frequent remission of a certain amount of the hours of study; it was one of the Imperial privileges which he most frequently exercised, and the announcement in the schools of Berlin, as soon as the scholars assembled,—for they were never told the day before that they need not appear,—that "His Majesty the Emperor has all-graciously decreed to-day as a holiday on account of—— " was always greeted with lusty cheers

and wavings. So the school children of Cassel and Wilhelmshöhe were there in large numbers under the care of their teachers, waving flags, full of excitement and anticipation. They "waited and waited and waited," as one of them described it, and then word came that fog in the Channel had delayed the King's arrival and he would consequently be late; so the people kept on waiting, the State officials wandered disconsolately up and down between the station and the Castle, the soldiers lining the route grew more and more weary in the hot sun, the smaller children had to be sent home, and the older ones grew very tired and lost some of their first fresh enthusiasm. No one knew exactly when the King might be expected, and, as frequently happens, the delay on the water led to further delays on land, and the Royal train was held up at unexpected places in Germany, and nobody, not even the Court officials, who were continually receiving telegrams from various places *en route*, could definitely say at what time the King would arrive.

Now nothing upsets officials of the German Court—and also, I should imagine, of any other Court—than a hitch in the proceedings. It throws everything out of gear and has strange unforeseen ramifications and consequences. It nullifies all previous orders and destroys all the carefully thought-out arrangements made with such painstaking, almost meticulous care. It puts everybody, with every excuse, into a bad temper, and it was particularly unfortunate on this occasion, as the King's visit had been eagerly anticipated by the Prussian

Court, and everything possible done to give him a hearty reception.

He arrived finally somewhere about twelve o'clock, and drove by the Emperor's side through the cheering crowds up to the beautiful Castle, where his charmingly tactful personality soon obliterated the memory of the inconvenience caused by the unpunctuality of his arrival. But there were not wanting many people who murmured and grumbled and pointed a moral.

"Always, when the English come, something goes wrong. The English are never punctual. Our Emperor is always there in time."

Even the excellent speech made by the King in German at the banquet in the Castle in the evening, a speech widely reproduced and commented upon with much approval by the German Press, did not, in the minds of the public, make up for the delay and consequent inconvenience of his arrival.

It was at this banquet, while making his speech, that the King, at a momentary loss for an expression which eluded him, turned to Bülow, then Imperial Chancellor, asking him to supply the missing word, which he promptly did. All the German gentlemen of the suite who were present commented on this slight lapse of memory and the King's readiness in finding a way out of the difficulty. His fluent command of their language was always very flattering to the Germans.

"He speaks it like a born German," they would often say to me.

A few years later, when the King, accompanied by Queen Alexandra, came to Berlin in State, the year before his own death, his arrival was absolutely punctual, but even then there were certain " regrettable incidents " which might by a little foresight have been avoided. The arrival of the Royal train was described to me when she returned by the young Princess, now Duchess of Brunswick, who at that time was a girl of sixteen, and had accompanied her parents and brothers to the station.

" We were all there," she said, " as the train steamed in, standing on the red carpet; the guard of honour presented arms, the band played ' God Save the King,' we wore our most welcoming expressions, all the officials put their heels together and bowed, but—nothing happened ! There was no King and no Queen to be seen —the saloon appeared to be empty, and all that was visible in the corridors were frantic footmen and *Jägers* dashing up and down. The band went on playing, the soldiers went on presenting arms, we looked at each other and wondered what to do next. Then suddenly we saw the King getting out right at the very end of the train where there wasn't anything but porters and servants waiting to take away the luggage. Of course we all rushed down there, Papa and Mama and the gentlemen and all of us tearing along, and all the officials, and the band stopped and then began again—they'd played ' God Save the King ' four times already—and there, on that horrid bit of platform, smelling of I don't know what, all crowded up into a tiny space where we couldn't move

without treading on each other's toes, we welcomed 'Onkel Edward' to Berlin—not a very good beginning, was it?"

It subsequently transpired that the King, leaving his own State saloon in the middle of the train to visit Queen Alexandra in her apartment farther down, some shunting operations had taken place at the last stoppage before reaching Berlin, and carriages without corridor communication had been interposed, so that His Majesty found it impossible to regain his own saloon.

However, in spite of the inauspicious beginning, "Onkel Edward" managed to make a good impression on the people of Berlin, more particularly on the burghers who entertained him at the newly-completed *Rath-Haus*. These gentlemen, among the most cultivated and liberal-minded of the Empire, were delighted with the King's command of their language and the geniality and kindness of his manner. Edward VII at that time was in but indifferent health, and travelled accompanied by a trained nurse, but he did not spare himself in the least, and cheerfully went through all the arduous duties of receptions, theatrical performances, and public appearances which filled up the week of his stay.

One other "rift within the lute" occurred during the visit of the English *Konigs-paar*, as they were called in Berlin. One afternoon, passing through a corridor of the Castle, I met the two youngest sons of the Emperor, the Princes Oskar and Joachim, wearing full-dress uniform and looking rather bored and evidently suffering from a

grievance. They both fell on me as the only outlet for emotions which were becoming too strong for them, and began to bemoan the fact that they had been waiting an interminable time and were not able to go out or do the things that they expected and desired to do, as they were waiting for a summons to the King of England's apartment, as he wished to bestow a decoration upon each of them. The Princes appeared to me more acutely alive to the inconvenience rather than to the honour to which they were destined, and indeed it is strange how little the most highly-coveted honours are valued by those to whom they come with a certain monotonous ease. They seemed to think that being English I could explain why they were kept cooling their heels and wasting their time for so long.

"Here we've been sitting for nearly two hours, waiting and waiting and waiting," grumbled Prince Joachim. He used exactly the same expression as the little girl had done at Wilhelmshöhe.

I tried in vain to discover palliative circumstances and suggested sending a footman to the King's apartments to discover what was the cause of the delay in the summons, but a messenger appearing at that moment at the end of the corridor, both Princes dashed in his direction, and I was glad to escape from further questioning.

Later on in the evening I saw Prince Oskar again.

"Well," he said gloomily, "we didn't get our decorations after all."

PRINCE OSCAR OF PRUSSIA, FIFTH SON OF THE GERMAN EMPEROR

"What!" I exclaimed, aghast. "Not after all that waiting? Why ever not?"

"Because," he answered grimly, "it seems that we already had them. The King had given us both the Victoria Order when he came to Wilhelmshöhe three years ago, and it seems that was the Order he wished to present to us to-day, so when somebody at the eleventh hour discovered that we had already got it, the whole thing was off of course, and our waiting was all in vain."

"But how exceedingly idiotic," I exclaimed, feeling very angry with the unknown official responsible for this piece of stupidity. "Naturally the King can't remember every Order he presents, but why didn't the responsible gentleman, whoever it was, look up the list and tell the King that your Royal Highness already had received the Order?"

"Yes. Why indeed?" returned the Prince; then in a kindly tone, seeing I was rather disturbed, "Still, we have our own stupid German officials too. I think that living at Court is apt to sap one's brains," and smilingly he passed on, leaving me trying to believe, but with no very great success, that such incidents were liable to occur everywhere. Still I was convinced that they did not happen at the Court of William II.

Perhaps the very worst result of English negligence was, however, on the occasion of the visit of the late Lord Roberts to Berlin, where great preparations were made by the Emperor for his reception, a guard of honour sent to the station, and the Crown Prince deputed

to meet him there. On the morning of his presumed arrival every arrangement was carried out with great exactitude, the guard of honour went early to the station, the Crown Prince was there waiting, everything possible had been done to honour the old warrior, but when the train arrived he was not in it, had never been in it, but was at that moment lying ill in bed at his hotel in Vienna. The day before, as soon, in fact, as his illness had shown the utter impossibility of his visit to Berlin on the appointed day,—he was suffering from rather a severe chill, —he had without delay telegraphed to the British Embassy in Berlin to that effect, asking them to take the necessary steps to inform the Emperor, and to ask that the ceremonies arranged for his reception should be postponed until he was able to travel, which he hoped to do in two days' time. This telegram—the Emperor himself told me this—duly arrived at the British Embassy, but was not then opened because the *attaché* whose duty it was to open official telegrams happened to be absent for a few days! Whether this was the real explanation I cannot tell. It sounds almost incredible, but it was the one believed by the Emperor and his suite, and did not add to their respect for our diplomatic organization.

The Emperor himself entertained the opinion—with, I must admit, some sufficient reason—that English *attachés* were of a lazy, pleasure-loving disposition, regarding their posts as mere opportunities for seeing the world, and not at all anxious to make them profit-

able to their country. I remember him coming in to luncheon one day full of scorn of one English officer then staying at the British Embassy. His Majesty had invited him to see some rather interesting early-morning manœuvres which were to take place near Potsdam, but the gentleman in question never put in an appearance, although a horse and an orderly had been told off for his benefit.

"Too early for him to get up in the morning, I suppose," scoffed the Emperor, who, when on manœuvres, was, with his sons, always in the saddle by five o'clock in the morning.

His Majesty was never able to get over the fact that our English Ministers of War were frequently—indeed one might say invariably—gentlemen of no military training whatever, and he was continually telling the anecdote of his offer to Lord Haldane of an opportunity to be present at the German autumn manœuvres, and that gentleman's confession that he must decline it as he was no horseman.

He several times asked me how it was that we appointed men to the office of War Minister, as he called it, whose qualifications for that office were not at all obvious.

"They know absolutely nothing about military matters, it seems to me," he said, knitting a perplexed brow, "and yet you pay them a very large salary, much higher than we do in Germany; but ours are experts, yours are amateurs."

I murmured something deprecatory, alluding to our parliamentary system and popular government, ending up with Cromwell and our fear of a military dictatorship. I felt I was skating on very thin ice when I found myself, before I realized what I was doing, saying to the Emperor, "In Germany the army is the master of the people, in England we look upon it as our servant."

"But even that," laughed William, "does not explain why you put the affairs of the army into the hands of an untrained man."

It was happy for me, when somewhat depressed in spirit by the apparent perfection of German methods and the equally apparent lack of organization and forethought in our own British manner of doing things, that I was prevented from falling into the lower deeps of despondency by association with one of the gentlemen of the Court who proved a salutary antidote to my dejected moods. Not indeed in any spirit of contrast, for his was a mind naturally pessimistic in cast and wrapped in impenetrable gloom, with an inherent capacity for seeing the weak points in circumstances or people.

He usually formed one of the suite of the Empress when the Court was on what might be called its summer holiday in July and August. There were then unusual opportunities for us to exchange views on various subjects, and he was, as far as I could discover, the only German of the Court who appeared to have any mis-

givings as to the absolute excellence of German methods of government. On the contrary, he was gifted with a Cassandra-like facility of prophetic foreboding and denunciation which at the time I thought exaggerated, but now perceive to have been permeated by a good deal of truth and foresight.

He had a blunt, rather ferocious, manner of stating things to the Empress, who valued him highly, while ridiculing all he said. There was no doubt that his propensity for seeing clearly was accentuated by the servility and easy smoothness, and somewhat mawkish atmosphere of the Court, where every one, perhaps unconsciously, combined to present a false view, or at least a warped view, of things to those "born in the purple."

Once I remember at Cadinen, I was strolling along the straight, tree-bordered, unfenced road leading from Elbing to Frauenburg, the ancient town of whose red-brick cathedral Copernicus was once lay-canon. The road ran past the farmyard which nestled so confidingly under the very nose of the Royal Schloss. In Germany it is considered a sign of supersensitiveness and deficiency in practical common sense to object to farmyard odours. In Hesse, indeed, does not every manure heap occupy a position in the main street immediately underneath the windows of the best parlour? As I wandered on past the cowsheds, admiring the brilliant masses of corn-flowers and poppies which bordered the road, I came upon the cynical gentleman, his gaze fixed upon

the telegraph poles, which could be followed for some distance in diminishing perspective.

"*Dumm!*" ("Stupid!") was his ejaculation at catching sight of me.

I stopped and looked at him inquiringly. As far as could be seen we two were the only living things in sight, with the exception of a few geese wandering over the stubble fields.

"You allude, I suppose, to the telegraph posts?" I suggested. They had been erected since our last visit the year before, and were one of the obvious necessities of the Emperor's occupation of the then newly-acquired Cadinen estate.

He shook his head in a manner suggestive of feelings too deep for expression, and then, in a flood of abuse of Government methods, pointed out to his own satisfaction, but in a series of arguments too rapid and involved for me to follow, that if the authorities had only had the sense to erect the posts on the other side of the road, the extension of the East Prussian telegraph system which was planned for the following year could have been carried out without the expense of the erection of a second line of posts. He inveighed against the crass stupidity of people who committed such follies, but of course, he said, it was only a further example of the colossal stupidity with which everything in Germany was managed.

I was so gratified at all he said, that when he stopped, almost suffocated by the warm convincingness

of his own arguments, I began to thank him with effusion.

"How comforting it is!" I exclaimed, "how gratifying! To hear that England does not possess the only Government in the world capable of making mistakes. I thought that here in Germany such things could not possibly happen."

He made a large gesture to the heavens with his hands as though invoking the aid of higher powers to give me understanding, and shaking his head solemnly and with an air of implacable melancholy, he retired up the road towards Elbing, leaving me to wonder if, in any age of the world's history, there had ever existed any Government which earned the unqualified approbation of all parties of the State.

CHAPTER XV

CONCLUSION

ON the evening of May 24, 1913, I stood among the crowd of ladies and officers who from the gallery of the White Hall in the Royal Castle of Berlin were watching the scene below, one of marvellous beauty, full of sparkle and colour.

It was during the progress of the Torch Dance, that old custom, the concluding ceremony of all wedding festivities held at the Prussian Court, which each bride and bridegroom of the house, not even excepting the Emperor and Empress Frederick, though they were married in England, must lead.

A constantly reiterated old-world melody to the accompanying blare of trumpets sounded from the musicians' gallery opposite, where the band of the Guards was playing with their accustomed fervour and skill, while down below, on the polished floor of the hall, the Emperor's only daughter, the bride of the occasion, with her bridegroom, the young Prince Ernest of Cumberland, since then succeeded to the Duchy of Brunswick, moved, preceded by a dignified Master of the Ceremonies and twelve scarlet-clad pages bearing

long flaring torches, round and round the large hall in stately promenade, the bride leading out at each circling of the room two of the male Royalties among the wedding guests, while the bridegroom did the same with the ladies among them.

There was a wonderful sweeping of Court trains on the floor, that of the bride in white and silver being carried by four young maidens in shorter ones of rose-colour.

King George and Queen Mary of England were walking for the first—and probably the last—time of their lives in the historic dance, while the Czar of all the Russias, own cousin of the bridegroom and of the British sovereign, with a grave smile on his face, took his part also in the pleasant ceremony, his hand in one of the bride's, while her other was given to King George. Round they paced each in their turn, until at last the younger Princes and Princesses—there are so many of them in Germany—came on in threes and fours,—otherwise the dance might have stretched into midnight,—and moved in a chain of smiling youth down the polished floor.

Peeping over the marble rail of the gallery were two young lieutenants in uniform whom I had last seen only three years before in sailor suits. They were the cousins and former playfellows of the Emperor's daughter, the two young Princes Max and Fritz of Hesse, the elder of whom was killed at the beginning of the European War. They had evidently preferred to look on rather

than take part in the brilliant spectacle, and watched with deep interest their parents, the Prince and Princess Frederick Charles of Hesse, the latter a sister of the Kaiser, as they came down from the dais and took their part in the moving picture down below.

All round the hall, in the gallery, and on the wide stairs leading up to it, a crowd of courtiers looked and whispered. Everybody was in good humour and charmed with everything. It looked as though universal peace had settled upon the nations. At no former Prussian wedding—not even that of the Crown Prince—had there been two crowned heads among the guests, and those, moreover, of Russia and Great Britain, the countries of whom Germany was most suspicious. It was, every one decided, a happy augury; and not less so the apparent ending of the unhappy quarrel between the Emperor and the Duke of Cumberland, father of the bridegroom, heirs to a feud begun in the time of a former generation.

So that never before had there been such a delightful sense of peace and harmony, of genuine delight in a pleasant spectacle, of sympathy and joy with the young couple, of belief that the future would be better than the past.

When the ceremony came to an end, when the bride and bridegroom had at last finished their task, when the last guest had returned to the dais, the Emperor gave a signal, and the line of red pages, still carrying their torches, turned towards the wide exit, the bride and

bridegroom followed them hand in hand, the two Emperors, the Empress, King George, Queen Mary, followed by the rest of the Royal guests, walking in stately procession, slowly disappeared from view, while from the gallery above the music became fainter and all the beautiful moving panorama of colour down below gradually dissolved as though it had never been.

If those who watched had only known, it was the close of an era that they were beholding, the sunset of the world's friendship.

That was the last meeting of the Czar with the German Emperor before the war. When he departed for Russia an hour or two after he had danced with the smiling bride, could he have foreseen what the following year was to bring ?

King George and Queen Mary remained yet two days longer in Berlin, appearing upon the last night of their stay in the State box at the Opera with the Emperor, who explained to them the various scenes of the work performed, "Corcyra," written by Imperial command round the various dances of the peasants of Corfu, the Greek island where His Majesty some years ago bought the palace built by the late Empress of Austria.

The King and Queen went away leaving golden impressions behind them, and the Prussian Court settled down to an unaccustomed quiet, the departure of the only daughter having left an inappeasable vacancy, in which respect Courts and humbler people are much akin.

An interpreter of omens might perhaps have discovered a foreshadowing of events in an incident which occurred at the very end of the wedding festivities.

When the bridal procession had vanished from the White Hall, when the music had died away, and the lights were being extinguished one by one, leaving only the corridors illuminated, down which the stream of guests outside the Royal circle were returning, I found myself walking with the decorous crowd of ladies with their trains over their arms, with gorgeous chamberlains in their coats stiff with gold embroidery, wearing the gold key emblematic of their office, and officers of the army and navy. There was no crush, no crowding in the spacious galleries, time for greetings and talk with old acquaintances of bygone days. But when we passed through the ponderous doors at the end, opened and shut by Royal lackeys, we came upon a scene of strange disorder and confusion. Everybody appeared to be pushing and struggling and thrusting at each other. Somebody cannoned against me with such irresistible force that I was cast bodily on to the capacious chest of a very tall and stately—at least he would have been stately if circumstances had allowed it—gold-laced official. I still remember the very scratchy feeling of the gold lace as it scraped my face and arms. I rebounded from him into the arms of a *Kammer-herr* opposite, an old friend as it happened, who received my sudden onslaught charmingly, and declared himself delighted to see me—a proof, I thought, on his part of

splendid presence of mind and good humour. But we had not time to say more, for to our horror we suddenly found ourselves being roughly thrust upon certain Royalties, those whom only half an hour before we had seen passing with so much state down the hall. Here they were, in some mysterious manner in the central vortex of a very badly-behaved crowd, for the roughness and absolute lack of courtesy of the young officers in it were the following day the subject of universal comment. Every one could see that the confusion was chiefly owing to the rough by-play and uncontrolled spirits of a group of young lieutenants who appeared to think it good fun to push and charge into the crowd from the outskirts. A few of the older men and the Court officials did their best to protect the ladies, but the young officers hustled and thrust regardless of consequences, and seemed to have quite lost any sense of decent behaviour. Some of those near me kept on apologizing profusely, but all the time were evidently doing their best to increase the confusion, behaving generally in a very ill-mannered way.

The whole situation was very unpleasant and chaotic. The ladies' veils and dresses were torn and jerked, they were flung backwards and forwards, and shouts and screams of remonstrance could be heard, adding obviously to the joy of the "hooligans" of the crowd. But when the various Royalties who were trying to pass through the room to their apartments began too to be tossed and hustled violently back and forth, matters were felt to be

serious, the officials remonstrated angrily in stentorian tones, and the Master of the Ceremonies, the Prince Fürstenburg, he who half an hour before had been leading the pages of the Torch Dance with stately tread, seizing his long wand of office struck it angrily against the floor, haranguing the mob, for it was nothing else, in stern and angry tones, and in a few minutes order was restored, and the Royalties, with somewhat ruffled plumes, were able to pass on their way.

The cause of the concentration of the crowd in this apartment had been to obtain one of the white silk ribbons bearing the cipher of the bride and the date of her wedding—the so-called Bride's Garter, which was distributed by her Mistress of the Robes. This lady, being somewhat unnerved by the crowd which bore upon her, and further handicapped by her long white gloves, which stuck to the fringes of the ribbons and prevented her from handling them with speed, fumbled over her task and was so slow about it that the worst elements of the crowd—there is no crowd quite so ruthless and selfish as a well-dressed one—began to get restive. Some people received half a dozen pieces of ribbon and some had none.

The Emperor, when he heard next day of the disorderly scene, was extremely angry, and decreed that at no future wedding should there be any Garter-distribution by the Mistress of the Robes, but that everybody entitled to receive one should have it by post.

But, as a matter of fact, the other weddings of his

sons all took place during the war, in somewhat hasty fashion, with none of the accustomed ceremonies, and the Torch Dance of his daughter's marriage was the last time of its performance in his family.

About four years before the wedding, the Arch-Duke Franz Ferdinand, with his morganatic wife, the Duchess of Hohenburg, had visited the Emperor at the New Palace. The Arch-Duke was a stout, rather truculent-looking individual of no pronounced qualities of mind as far as one could gather. His wife appeared to be decidedly the better half, and made a very pleasant impression upon the Empress and the ladies of the Court.

After their departure, frequent and heated discussions took place among the ladies with regard to the position of the Duchess whenever her husband should become Emperor, especially in view of the complicated situation arising from the fact that though by the Constitution she could never succeed to the throne of Austria, barricaded as it is by stringent laws of succession, yet there was no reason why she should not ascend that of Hungary. The Duchess was very popular among the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church, and it was believed by many that they would have thrown the whole weight of their influence into the attempt to get her acknowledged as reigning Empress; while, on the other hand, it was maintained that neither the old aristocracy of Austria, so tenacious of its rights, nor the next heir to the throne after Franz Ferdinand, would be likely to tolerate the granting of Imperial rights to a line whose

claims were so patently unlawful. However, in due time the assassin's bullet settled this question once and for all; but as I look back and think of this graceful woman, not beautiful, but of a pleasant, intelligent type of face, with her uninteresting spouse, to whom she was deeply devoted, and of the fact that their assassination at Sarajevo was the pretext and signal for the outbreak of the most dreadful war that has ever been chronicled, when I consider that the fate of these two people, insignificant in personality and of no intrinsic value to the world, should have been the means of setting alight the flame that has devastated Europe, I wonder at the supine gullibility of nations, at their willingness to slay and be slain for a cause which is hid from them, at the waste of so much splendid valour and precious human life for a thing of so infinitely little worth, the prestige of a vain and futile monarchy and the ambition and pride that lie at the root of every war that has ever been.

Many people have pondered the problem of the personal share of the German Emperor in this war, and of the genuineness or otherwise of his reiterated aspirations after world-peace. Of a deliberate intention to provoke, or a desire for war he may perhaps be acquitted, but that his temperament and cast of mind have had their due share in the catastrophe there can be little doubt. Perhaps it is not given to a man brought up in the atmosphere of Courts, and gifted with the assertive personality which quells and cows remonstrance, to be

able to see clearly the ultimate issues of the steps he takes and their effect upon other minds. The German Emperor has received an essentially military training; his chief advisers, his chief companions, those whose influence has most moulded his thought, have been military men, obsessed with the military idea, which percolates continually even to the art and literature of modern Germany.

As a boy he lived in the days of the Franco-Prussian War, when as yet there was no German Emperor and his grandfather was only King of Prussia. All his young enthusiasm was stirred by the swift and victorious events of those early days when the German Empire was founded and the Imperial crown descended on his family. His father's death and his early ascent of the throne, combined with his own striking and audacious personality, have made him into a very complacent personage. He never desires to be anything but assertive. His histrionic tastes, which are very much in evidence, tell him that a modest Emperor is something of an anomaly, a failure, and a mistake. An Emperor must be Imperial in word and deed, must think and live imperially, and so William has always striven to do this. He openly scoffs at the idea of an Emperor going out attended only by one adjutant.

"That might do for my grandfather's time," he has been heard to say, "but we live in another century."

He has certain Napoleonic traits in his character—a love of splendour in his Court, a yearning after the

spectacular, a desire to strike the public eye and the public imagination.

When he so often reiterated in bygone days his ardent hope to preserve the peace of the world, he was no doubt quite sincere in what he said, but together with this desire was coupled also a talent for doing and saying many things opposed to it—a contradiction in conduct not unfrequently found combined in other persons. He never perceived that his own good intentions were not as obvious to the world as his military speeches and acts. He was often violently angry with irresponsible sections of the English Press, attributing to their utterances a Government inspiration which was palpably absent. He was a man who both publicly and privately seemed to inspire a certain amount of distrust in his sincerity, a doubt as to whether his speech was the true reflex of his mind, whether his apparent frankness of utterance did not hide other intentions than those expressed. Those of his own subjects who came into frequent and immediate contact with him, though absolutely loyal, were not as devoted to him personally as had been the servants of his grandfather, William I, who seems to have inspired an affection denied to his grandson. But with the multitude, the crowd in the street, the frequenters of Unter den Linden, the Emperor has always been regarded as a demi-god, as the most glorious man of his age, the promoter and inspirer of the modern German spirit, which he indeed epitomizes to a great extent, although he does not always see eye to eye with his people.

With regard to the Emperor's views on religion, they are, as far as I could gather, expressed in his public speeches. He conforms outwardly to the prescribed forms of the Lutheran Church, and deplores the infidelity of the German nation, chiefly because he believes that it undermines the monarchical principle.

Sometimes, after supper, while the Empress and her ladies were working, and the gentlemen discussed the glasses of beer or orange-juice which were handed round with the tea, the Emperor would read aloud to us. One of those readings was a sermon taken from an English book, a collection called "Conversations with Christ," and this particular religious essay discussed in a very interesting and scholarly manner the character and temperament of Pilate. The Emperor interpolated his reading with remarks on the analogy, pointed out indeed by the writer, between the Roman Governor of Judæa and a District Magistrate in India, and of the parallel difficulty of their respective positions among a people of alien customs and religions.

It appeared to me that the Emperor's ideas of our Indian officials were hardly fair to them. He seemed to think that the hard-working servants of our Eastern Empire were the same as those of the days of Warren Hastings and the East India Company, that they went to India chiefly to enrich themselves at the expense of the natives, and received large presents and bribes from the native princes.

There was no opportunity for me to combat these

erroneous ideas of the Emperor, but the next day I attacked one of his suite, and told him that there was a very strict rule governing Indian civil servants, which forbade any official to accept any presents whatever from ruling princes.

"They may only take flowers and a few sweetmeats, all other presents are invariably returned when offered," I told him; but though he accepted my information with polite interest, I could see that it left room for much doubt in his mind as to the integrity of British rule in India.

I often had occasion to find the Emperor woefully misinformed on many subjects with regard to our British possessions. His knowledge was often antiquated and out of date, which in such a very up-to-date monarch was rather surprising.

However, he was extraordinarily pleased with the book of sermons, and insisted on reading them, in season and out of season, to his adjutants and also to a great many of the clergy of the Lutheran Church, to whom he recommended them as oratorical models; but it is not given to every one to be able to fight in Saul's armour, and, as few of the German clergy have progressed far in English, the suggestion fell on somewhat barren ground.

Evening after evening the Emperor would dip into his sermon-book, reading out paragraphs in his thick, harsh, nasal, rather indistinct voice. One among them ran as follows:

"The Present is not and cannot stand alone; it is

indissolubly connected with the Past and the Future. History alone has the true perspective by which to judge what is relatively great or little, what is of vital moment and what is of no consequence. That which we have regarded as trifling, history may dignify as of supreme importance; that which we have thought great, may turn out to be infinitesimal. Our only safety lies in giving heed to that which is permanent and unchanging, the moral quality of our deeds; . . . truth is not temporary, but eternal; right is not the expedient, but the just."

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